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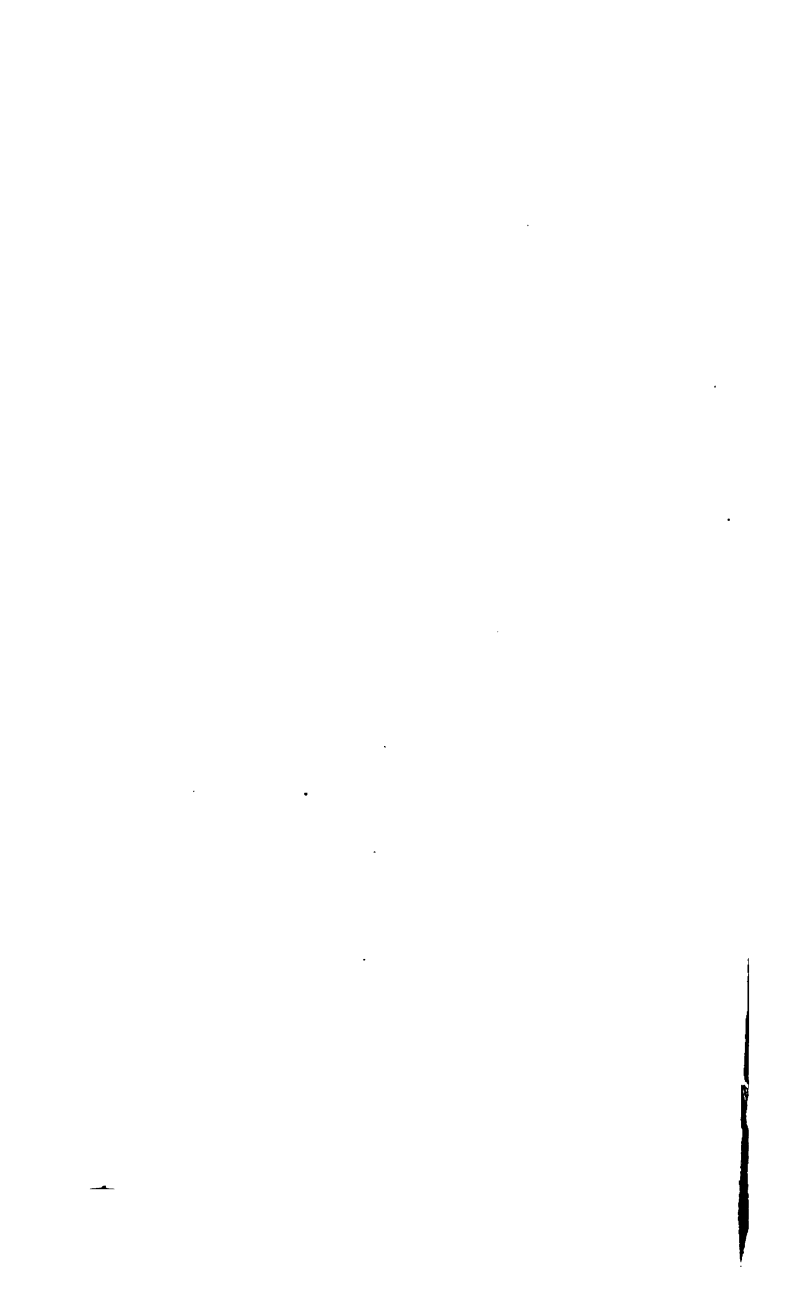
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MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATION
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OF
—
CHILDREN:

BEING

MRS. CHILD'S "MOTHER'S BOOK,"

REVISED, AND ADAPTED TO THE USE OF ENGLISH PARENTS
AND TEACHERS.

—
PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION,
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING
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ADVERTISEMENT
OF
THE ENGLISH EDITOR.

THIS excellent work was originally written by an American Lady, and has been highly approved by many persons of good judgment in this country. It recommends itself as the work of an intelligent and enlightened mind, while it breathes throughout the spirit of an affectionate Christian Parent. In the present edition, prepared for the aid and guidance of English Mothers, such alterations have been carefully made as seemed necessary to adapt it to general use, and to render it acceptable and beneficial here.

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INTRODUCTION.

I CANNOT offer a better or more appropriate introduction to this work, than an extract from Mr. Francis' *Discourse on Errors in Education*.

“It is not easy to estimate the influence even of what may seem an inconsiderable effort, when directed to such an object as education. It has been said, that a stone thrown into the sea agitates more or less every drop in that vast expanse of waters. So it may be with the influence we exert on the minds and hearts of the young. Who can tell what may be the effects of a single good principle deeply fixed, a single pure and virtuous association strongly riveted, a single happy turn effectually given to the thoughts and affections? It may spread a salutary and sacred influence over the whole life, and through the whole mass of the character of the child. Nay, more, as the characters of others, who are to come after him, may, and probably will, depend much on his, the impulse we give may not cease in him who first received it: it may go down from one generation to another, widening and deepening its influences as it goes, reaching forth with various modifications, more or

less direct, till the track of its agency shall be completely beyond human calculation.

“We are told, that when Antipater demanded of the Lacedemonians fifty of their children as hostages, they replied that they would rather surrender fifty of the most eminent men in the state, whose principles were already formed, than children, to whom the want of early instruction would be a loss altogether irreparable. The Spartans were wise: and shall Christians be less so? Oh no;—for we believe that our labour cannot perish even with life; we believe that, even if the inscrutable providence of God removes these objects of affection from us, neither the pleasure they have poured into our hearts, nor the good we have imparted to them will, or can, be lost.”

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THE MOTHER'S BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

THE BODILY SENSES.

Few people think that the management of very young babes has any thing to do with their future dispositions and characters ; yet I believe it has more influence than can easily be calculated. One writer on education even ventures to say, that the heaviness of the Dutch and the vivacity of the French are owing to the different manner in which infants are treated in those two countries.

The Dutch keep their children in a state of repose, always rocking, or lulling them ; the French are perpetually tossing them about, and showing them what is lively and exciting. I think a medium between these two extremes would be the most favourable to a child's health and faculties.

An infant is, for a while, totally ignorant of the use of the senses with which he is endowed. At first, he does not see objects ; and when he sees them, he does not know that he can touch them. "He is obliged to serve an apprenticeship to the five senses," and at every step he needs assistance in learning his trade. Any one can see that assistance tends to quicken the faculties, by observing how much faster a babe improves, when daily surrounded by little brothers and sisters.

But in trying to excite an infant's attention, care *should* be taken not to confuse and distract him. His soul, like his body, is weak, and requires to have but little sustenance at a time, and to have it often. Gentleness, patience, and love, are almost every thing in education; especially to those helpless little creatures, who have just entered into a world where every thing is new and strange to them. Gentleness is a sort of mild atmosphere; and it enters into a child's soul, like the sunshine into the rose-bud, slowly but surely expanding it into beauty and vigour.

All loud noises and violent motions should be avoided. They pain an infant's senses, and distract his faculties. I have seen impatient nurses thrust a glaring candle before the eyes of a fretful babe, or drum violently on the table, or rock the cradle like an earthquake. These things may stop a child's cries for a short time, because the pain they occasion his senses, draws his attention from the pain which first induced him to cry; but they do not comfort or soothe him. As soon as he recovers from the distraction they have occasioned, he will probably cry again, and even louder than before. Besides the pain given to his mind, violent measures are dangerous to the bodily senses. Deafness and weakness of eye-sight may no doubt often be attributed to such causes as I have mentioned; and physicians are agreed that the dropsy on the brain is frequently produced by violent rocking.

Unless a child's cries are occasioned by sharp bodily pain, they may usually be pacified by some pleasing object, such as stroking a kitten, or patting the dog; and if their tears are really occasioned by acute pain, is it not cruel to add another suffering, by stunning them with noise, or blinding them with light?

Attention should be early aroused by presenting attractive objects—things of bright and beautiful colours, but not glaring—and sounds pleasant and soft to the ear. When you have succeeded in attracting a babe's attention to any object, it is well to let him examine it just as long as he chooses. Every time he turns it over, drops it, and takes it up again, he adds something to the little stock of his scanty experience. When his powers of attention are wearied, he will soon enough show it by his actions. A multitude of new playthings, crowded upon him one after another, only serve to confuse him. He does not learn so much as he would do from a few toys, because he has not time to become acquainted with the properties of any one of them. Having had his little mind excited by a new object, he should be left in quiet, to toss, and turn, and jingle it, to his heart's content. If he look up in the midst of his play, a smile should be always ready for him, that he may feel protected and happy in the atmosphere of love.

It is important that children, even when babes, should never be witnesses of anger, or any evil passion. They come to us from heaven, with their little souls full of innocence and peace, but with many germs of evil, which will be but too easily called into life and action, by the example of those about them.

Above all things, therefore, the mother should keep her own spirit in tranquillity and purity; for it is beyond all doubt that the state of a mother affects her child. There are proofs that this is true, both with regard to mind and body. A mere babe will grieve and sob at the expression of distress on a mother's countenance; he cannot possibly *know* what that expression means, but he *feels* that it is something painful—his mother's state affects him.

Effects on the bodily constitution will be more readily believed than effects on the mind, because the most thoughtless can see the one, and they cannot see the other. Children have died in convulsions, in consequence of their mother nursing them while under the influence of violent passion or emotion ; and who can tell how much of *moral* evil may be traced to the state of mind indulged by a mother, while tending the precious little being, who receives every thing from her ?

Therefore the first rule, and the most important of all, in education, is, that a mother govern her own feelings, and keep her heart and conscience pure.

The next most important thing appears to me to be, that a mother, as far as other duties will permit, take the entire care of her own child. I am aware that people of moderate fortune cannot attend exclusively to an infant. Other cares claim a share of attention, and sisters, or domestics, must be intrusted ; but where this must necessarily be the case, the infant should, as much as possible, feel its mother's guardianship. If in the same room, a smile, or a look of fondness, should now and then be bestowed upon him ; and if in an adjoining room, some of the endearing appellations to which he has been accustomed, should once in a while meet his ear. The knowledge that his natural protector and best friend is near, will give him a feeling of safety and protection alike conducive to his happiness and beneficial to his temper.

You may say, perhaps, that a mother's instinct teaches fondness, and that there is no need of urging that point ; but the misfortune is, mothers are sometimes fond by fits and starts—they follow impulse, not principle. Perhaps the cares of the world vex or discourage you—and you do not, as usual, smile upon your babe when he looks up

earnestly in your face,—or you are a little impatient at his fretfulness. Those who know your inquietudes may easily excuse this ; but what does the innocent being before you know of care and trouble ? and why should you cause his tranquillity to be disturbed by the worldly vexations you have encountered, but which he can neither relieve nor understand.

Do you say it is impossible always to govern one's feelings ? There is one method, a never-failing one—prayer. It consoles and strengthens the wounded heart, and tranquillizes the most stormy passions. You will say, perhaps, that you have not leisure to pray every time your temper is provoked, or your heart is grieved. It requires no time ; the inward ejaculation of “ Lord, help me to overcome this temptation,” may be made in any place, and amid any employments ; and if uttered in humble sincerity, the voice that said to the raging waters, “ Peace ! Be still ! ” will restore quiet to your troubled soul.

As the first step in education, I have recommended gentle, but constant efforts to attract the attention, and improve the bodily senses. I would here suggest the importance of preserving the organs of those senses in full vigour. For instance, the cradle should be so placed that the face of the infant may be in shade. A strong light is dangerous to his delicate organs of vision ; and if it be allowed to come in at one side, he may turn his eyes, in the effort to watch it. Glaring red curtains and brilliantly striped Venetian carpeting are bad things in a nursery, for similar reasons.

I have said nothing concerning the physical wants of children,—their food, diseases, &c.,—because such subjects are not embraced in the design of the present work. There are many good books written expressly with reference to them.

CHAPTER II.

THE AFFECTIONS.

THE cultivation of the affections comes next to the developement of the bodily senses ; or rather they may be said to begin together, so early does the infant heart receive impressions. The uniform gentleness, to which I have before alluded, and the calm state of the mother's own feelings, have much to do with the affections of the child.

Kindness towards animals is of great importance. Children should be encouraged in pitying their distress ; and if guilty of any violent treatment towards them, they should see that you are hurt by it, and disapprove it.

But before showing any disapprobation, a very young child should be made to understand when he really does hurt an animal ; for young children are often cruel from the mere thoughtlessness of frolic ; they strike an animal as they would strike a log of wood, without knowing that they occasion pain.

I once saw a mother laugh very heartily at the distressed face of a kitten, which a child of two years old was pulling backwards by the tail. At last, the kitten, in self-defence, turned and scratched the boy. He screamed, and his mother ran to him, kissed the wound, and beat the poor kitten, saying all the time, "Naughty kitten, to scratch John ! I'll beat her for scratching John ! There, ugly puss !"

This little incident, trifling as it seems, no doubt had important effects on the character of the child ; especially

as a mother, who would do such a thing once, would be very likely to do it habitually.

In the first place, the child was encouraged in cruelty, by seeing that it gave his mother amusement. Had she explained to him that he was hurting the kitten, and expressed her pity by saying, "Oh, don't hurt kitty—she is a good little puss—and she loves John,"—what a different impression would have been made on his infant heart!

In the next place, the kitten was struck for defending herself; this was injustice to the injured animal, and a lesson of tyranny to the boy. In the third place, striking the kitten because she had scratched him, was teaching him retaliation. For that reason, a chair or a footstool, against which a child may have accidentally hurt himself, should never be struck, or treated in an angry manner. You know, to be sure, that an inanimate object is not capable of feeling pain; but your infant does not know it; the impression made upon *him* is, that it is right to injure when we are injured.

A spirit of revenge is one of those evil passions to which our nature is most prone, and, with respect to which, we should therefore most anxiously guard against the influences of example and of habit.

In proportion as the influences of the nursery are pure and holy, evil passions will remain dormant, whilst better dispositions are strengthened and encouraged, until the child's understanding becoming enlightened, and his principles and habits formed, the temptations of the world will have less danger for him, and he will more easily learn to practise that lesson of divine morality which instructs us to "overcome evil with good."

But if, on the other hand, the influences of the nursery

are bad, the evil passions of the child are strengthened before his understanding can be brought in aid for counteraction; he gets into habits of evil before he is capable of perceiving that they are evil. Consequently, when he comes out into the world, he brings no armour against its temptations. Evil is within and without. And should the Lord finally bring him out of Egypt, it must be after a dark, and weary bondage.

The mind of a child is not like that of a grown person, too full and too busy to observe every thing; it is a vessel always ready to receive, and always receiving.

Every look, every movement, every expression, does something towards forming the character of the little heir to immortal life.

Do you regard it as too much trouble thus to keep watch over yourself? Surely the indulgence of evil is no privilege: the yoke of goodness is far lighter and easier to bear, than the bondage of evil. Is not the restraint which you impose upon yourself for the good of your child, blessed, doubly blessed to your own soul? Does not the little cherub in this way guide you to heaven, marking the pathway by the flowers he scatters as he goes?

The rule, then, for developing good affections in a very young child is, that he never be allowed to see or feel the influence of bad passions, even in the most trifling things; and in order to effect this, you must drive evil passions out of your own heart. Nothing can be real that has not its home *within* us. The only sure way, as well as the easiest, to *appear* good, is to *be* good.

It is not possible to indulge anger, or any other wrong feeling, and conceal it entirely. If not expressed in words, a child *feels* the baneful influence. The evil sympathies of his moral nature are excited as unconsciously, as his bodily

frame may be affected by a subtile and destructive poison, infused into his lungs with the imperceptible atmosphere he breathes : and the beautiful little image of God is more and more defaced and disqualified for its home in heaven.

CHAPTER III.

INTELLECT.—ATTENTION.

A YOUNG mother, especially if she has been accustomed to the society of sensible men, is apt to be too impatient in her endeavour to cultivate the intellect of her child. But let her remember that she must set about this very gently and gradually, or she will do more harm than good even to his mind, at the same time that she may materially injure his bodily health, by the unnatural and premature exertion of his mental faculties.

All attempts to draw out a child's powers of abstract reasoning for instance, which some of our modern writers for children seem so anxious to encourage, should be postponed at least to the age of twelve or fourteen years. Very young children will occasionally exercise their faculties in this way, and it is not meant to say that they should be discouraged in it, because it is good to let the mind of a child have free play whatever its natural bent may be ; but as bodily health ought always to be the first object, and nothing seems to affect bodily health so much as premature mental exertion, a mother should take great care that her natural anxiety for her child's welfare does not lead her to be impatient in the cultivation of his intellect.

The first effort of intellect is to associate the names of objects with the sight of them. In order to assist a babe in this particular, when you direct his attention to any object, speak the name of the object, slowly and distinctly. After a few times, he will know the thing by its name; and if you say Dog, when the dog is not in the room, he will show that he knows what you mean, by looking round in search of him.

By degrees, a few words can be added. He will soon learn to repeat, "Good little dog;" and though he may not have very exact ideas of what good means, the tone of the voice, and the manner in which you speak, will make him think it is something pleasant. When you draw a child's attention to a living thing, it is well to accompany it with some endearment to the animal; this will awaken his affections, as well as his thoughts. In teaching a child to talk, low, mild tones should be used.

Too much cannot be said on the importance of giving children early habits of observation. This must be done by teaching them to pay attention to surrounding objects, and to inquire into their nature, qualities, uses, and relations, as far as they may be capable of understanding them. No doubt many mothers will say, "I cannot thus train the minds of my children; for it is my misfortune not to have had an education myself." This answer is very frequently given; and if by education is meant book-learning, the excuse is indeed a poor one. Good judgment, kind feelings, and habitual command over one's own passions, are necessary in the education of children; but learning is not necessary. The mother, who has had no other advantages than are furnished by a school in a remote country village, knows a great many more things than a child of three or four years old can possibly know. Early

accustom your children to inquire about the things they handle. What if you cannot always answer them? You do them an immense deal of good by giving their minds active habits. If a spirit of inquiry is once aroused, it will, sooner or later, find means to satisfy itself; and thus the inquisitive boy will become an active and energetic man.

I will give some familiar instances of what I mean. Generally speaking, when mothers have done superintending domestic concerns for the day, and have seated themselves, to "take some comfort," as the phrase is, "with their children," they spend the time in trotting them, or shaking the rattle, or dragging about the little cart, or repeating over and over again, "Pat a cake, pat a cake." Now this is extremely well; and should on no account be omitted. But something ought to be mixed with these plays to give the child habits of thought. Toys amuse him for the time; but he grows weary of them, and when he does not hear, or see them, they do not furnish any thing for him to think about. But should you, while tossing a ball, stop and say, "This ball is *round*; this little tea-table is *square*. Now George knows what *round* and *square* mean,"—it would give him something to think about. When he has a new toy, he will think to himself whether it is round or square. It is not well to tell him more than one thing at a time, nor to enter into any detailed explanations. It is a bad thing to have an infant's attention wearied. It is enough for him to know that the ball is round and the table square. When he is older, you can explain to him that a square has always equal sides, and that the edge of a round thing is always equally distant from the centre. The mind of a child has been well compared to a vessel with a narrow neck, which you can only fill by dropping into it a little

at a time. If you attempt to pour in too much at once, or too hastily, all is lost.

Another day, should you show him a ball of yarn, and ask him if it be round or square, if he recollects what you have told him, it will make his little heart very happy; and should you reward his answer with a smile and a kiss, you will undoubtedly have done much to awaken his powers of observation.

So much for the first step. At another time, should you chance to be spinning a piece of money, for his amusement, you can, in the midst of the play, stop and say, "This shilling is round, as well as the ball; but the shilling is flat, and the ball is not flat. If George puts his hand on the shilling, he will feel that it is flat; and if he puts his hand on the ball, he will feel that it is not flat. Now George knows what *flat* means." Here I would remark, that if the child is impatient to have the money spinning, and does not love to hear about its form, it is unwise to cross his inclinations. We never remember so well what we do not love to hear; and forced instruction is apt to injure the temper, and give an early aversion to knowledge.

We are apt to forget that things long familiar to us are entirely unknown to an infant. There is hardly any thing connected with his little wants, which may not be made a pleasant medium of instruction. When eating a piece of bread, the following questions may be asked and answered. "What is bread made of?" "I don't know: what is it made of, mother?" "It is made of grain; sometimes of rye, and sometimes of wheat flour." "What is grain made of?" "It grows in the field. The farmers plant it in the ground, and God causes it to grow."

When a child is playing with his kitten, it is easy to mix instruction with his enjoyment, by saying, "Feel pussy's fur—how smooth it is. Feel this piece of sugar—how rough it is. Pussy's fur is smooth, and the sugar is rough. Now George knows what *smooth* and *rough* mean."

As he grows older, the information given him may be of a higher character. He can be told, "The poker is made of iron. Iron is called a metal; it is dug out of the earth." At another time, he may be asked, "What is the cover of your book made of?" If he answer, "Of leather," ask him what leather is made of. If he does not know, tell him it is made of the skin of some animal, and explain what an animal is. Then ask him whether the cover of his book is a metal. If he say, "No," ask him how he knows that it is not. If he cannot answer, explain to him all the points of difference that occur to you, between a metal and an animal. Tell him, for instance, that "a metal is dug out of the earth, but an animal is a creature that grows, and can move about from one place to another. Your kitten is an animal; she grows bigger every day; and she moves about. Your cat was once a kitten, but now, she has done growing. The poker is not an animal, it does not grow any larger, and it cannot move." Afterwards, when a proper opportunity occurs, ask him to tell you the difference between a metal and an animal.

If he bring you a rose, you can say, "Thank you, George, for this rose. Now, can you tell me what it is? Is it a metal?" "No." "Is it an animal?" "I should think not, mother." "What is it then?" "I don't know." "I will tell you. It is a vegetable. Vegetables grow out

of the earth. They are not like metals, because they grow larger and larger ; and they are not like animals, because they cannot move of themselves. What are you George ?" "I am not a metal, for I grow bigger every day. I am not a vegetable, for I can walk. I think I am an animal."

Such conversations as these will make his thoughts busy ; and when he takes a book he will probably ask, "What are the leaves of books made of?" "They are made of paper." "What is paper made of?" "Of rags." "What are rags made of?" "Sometimes of linen, and sometimes of cotton. Cotton grows in a pod, and linen is made from a plant called flax." "Then the leaves of my book are vegetable." This discovery, simple as it is, will afford the boy great pleasure, and will make it more easy to exercise his powers of thought.

I dare say the preceding hints will sound silly enough to many mothers ; but they are, nevertheless, founded in reason and sound sense. It is a fact that children, thus early accustomed to observe, will have a wonderful power of amusing themselves. They will examine every figure in the carpet, and think to themselves whether it is round or square ; and will sit, by the half hour, quietly watching the figures on copper-plate or calico.

Arithmetic may very early be made a source of amusement ; for children can very soon learn to count sticks or marbles, and tell how many they should have left, if you should take away any given number.

With regard to the kind of information conveyed, as well as the quantity, that should depend upon the child's age, intelligence, and progress ; things which no person can have an opportunity to observe and know, so well as a mother. The system of making *use* of all the common

incidents of life to convey knowledge, and improve the heart, may be begun in the earliest childhood, and continued even until youth ripens into manhood. I will give a simple instance: an elder boy, when sailing in a boat, may be asked to observe how the hills and the trees *seem* to move from him, while in fact, the boat alone is moving. The simple fact may not be of much consequence to him; for, if he is a bright boy, he would have noticed it himself, without being asked to attend to it: but you can make it the means of illustrating another idea, by saying, “Just so the sun *seems* to move round the earth; but it does not move. The sun stands still, as the hills and trees do; but the earth is moving all the time.”

I am aware that these habits of inquiry are at times very troublesome; for no one, however patient, can be always ready to answer the multitude of questions a child is disposed to ask. But it must be remembered that all good things are accompanied with inconveniences. The care of children requires a great many sacrifices, and a great deal of self-denial; but the woman, who is not willing to sacrifice a good deal in such a cause, does not deserve to be a mother. Besides, the thoughtless, indolent parent, who is not willing to make sacrifices, and take trouble, has, in fact, the most trouble; for the evils she would not check at first, when it might easily have been done, afterwards grow too strong for her management.

But to return to the subject of asking questions. It is a spirit which should not be discouraged; and for this reason among others, that an opportunity once lost, is often lost for ever. When a thing is new to us we are desirous of gaining information respecting it; but when it is become familiar, we cease to think of it otherwise than as a fact with which we are already acquainted; and we no longer

feel the same inclination to inquire into its connexion with other facts and circumstances to which it may be related, in the way of cause, or effect, or otherwise. When this frame of mind becomes habitual, there is an end to all advancement, and the frequency of it is the most prevailing cause of ignorance. Children must, however, be taught that they cannot *always* be attended to. If you are otherwise occupied, and their inquiries distract you, think a moment, and collect yourself, lest you should answer pettishly. Do not say, "How you plague me, Jane! I wish you would go away and keep still!" But say, "I am very busy now, Jane. I cannot attend to you. If you will remember to ask me by and by, when I can attend to you, I will talk with you about it." If the child persists, the answer should be, "You know I always tell you what you ask, when I am not very busy. I cannot attend to you now; and if you tease me, I shall be very sorry; for I shall be obliged to put you out of the room." After this threat is once made, nothing should induce you to refrain from executing it. In order that your child may be easily satisfied with these kind, but firm refusals, when you are busy, you should try to bear in mind the question she has asked, and take the first leisure moment to reply to it. This will give her confidence in what you have said; and she will know it was not done merely to put her off.

Perhaps another difficulty may occur; your children may ask questions that you do not know how to answer. In that case, as in all others, the honest truth should be told. The reply should be, "I do not know. When your father comes home, we will ask him; perhaps he can tell us." If his father does not know, the answer may be, "We will endeavour to find some friend who understands it, or some book which has been written about it: and

this, like all other things that are promised, should be done.

If, as is often the case, a child asks an explanation, which would be altogether above his powers of comprehension, the answer should be, "If I were to tell you, you could not understand it now. You must wait till you are older." If your child has been early accustomed to the strictest regard to truth, he will believe what you say, and try to be satisfied. But you may generally contrive to give him some little insight into the subject, so as to make him understand something of the difficulty which would attend further explanation. Some children, being too much praised for their quickness, or their wit, ask a number of useless, pert questions. This disposition should be promptly and decidedly checked; for it is the germ of vanity and affectation. To avoid exciting this evil in the mind of a bright child, a very intelligent question, or remark, should never be quoted as anything remarkable, nor should he be at all encouraged to show off before company. The habit of reciting verses, and displaying other acquirements before strangers, is calculated to excite a mischievous vanity in children. They should be taught to love knowledge more for the sake of the good it will enable them to do to others, than because they will gain praise by it. A love of reputation is a powerful and dangerous temptation to active minds; and the more the evil is fostered in the nursery, the harder it is to overcome. Children should hear learning, and wealth, and all other external gifts, spoken of according to the use for which God has intended them. They should be told, "The more knowledge you gain, the more useful you can be to others, which is your first duty to your fellow-creatures, and brings with it, as a necessary consequence, wealth, and power, and influence, which are so much

desired by all men, but which can only be obtained with honour and security, when they are the reward of usefulness.

Perhaps you will say, that as your children grow older, they cannot help learning that a rose is a vegetable, the poker a metal, &c. ; and you will ask what is the use of teaching it to them a few years earlier than they would naturally take to find it out of themselves. I readily allow that the knowledge itself is of very little consequence to them ; but the *habits of attention and activity of mind*, which you give them, are worth everything.

If you take the trouble to observe, you will find those who are the most useful, and of course the most successful, in any department, are those who are in the habit of observing closely, and thinking about what they observe.

Why is it that a botanist will see hundreds of plants in a field, which the careless stroller may pass again and again without perceiving ? It is because his *attention* has been fixed upon plants. How is the great novelist enabled to give you such natural pictures of life and manners ? A close *attention* to all the varieties of human character, enables him to represent them as they are.

You will find that a smart, notable housewife is always an "*observing* woman." What constitutes the difference between a neat, faithful domestic, and a heedless, sluttish one ? One pays *attention* to what she is about, and the other does not. The slattern's hands may be very dirty, but she does not *observe* it ; every time she takes hold of the door, she may leave it covered with black prints, but she does not *observe* it. One educated to *attend* to things about her, would immediately see these defects and remedy them.

We often hear it said, "such a person has a good understanding, and good feelings ; but, somehow or other,

he has no common sense." The "sense" that is wanting is nothing more or less than an active habit of observation acquired in early life.

Those who give close and anxious attention to one thing, become skilful in it, but are very frequently careless and unobserving, and consequently ignorant, about everything else. This sort of character is not desirable; for if it makes a man greater in one particular branch, it much impairs his general usefulness. In a woman it is peculiarly unfortunate; for, whether she be rich or poor, the sphere allotted her by Providence requires attention to many things.

Literary women are not usually domestic; not because they cannot easily be so, but because they early acquired the habit of attending to literary subjects, and of neglecting others. It is not true that intellectual pursuits leave no time to attend to the common concerns of life. A woman who is vain of her person spends more time and thought about her dress, than the most learned woman spends about books. It is *attention* that is wanted to make the belle literary, and the learned lady domestic.

All the faculties of a child's mind should be cultivated, and they should early acquire a power of varying their attention, so as to be able to bestow it easily upon any subject whatsoever. Some think it a sign of good sense to despise good taste; hence the universal complaint that scholars are awkward and slovenly. Unquestionably this is better than the silly pursuit of ever-varying fashion; but there is no need of either extreme—extremes always lie on one side or the other of truth and nature.

Some, seeing the disastrous effects of an over-heated

imagination, think that any degree of imagination is inconsistent with good judgment. This is a mistake.—The finest imagination may be kept perfectly in check by good sense, provided all the powers of the mind are *equally* cultivated in early life. A great writer has said, "In forming the human character, we must not proceed as a statuary does in forming a statue, who works sometimes on the face, sometimes on the limbs, and sometimes on the folds of the drapery; but we must proceed (and it certainly is in our power) as nature does in forming a flower, or any other of her productions; she throws out altogether, and at once, the whole system of being, and the rudiments of all the parts."

To a woman, the power of changing her attention is peculiarly valuable. I have said that an exclusive attention to learning was a fault, as well as an exclusive attention to fashion; but while I condemn the *excessive* love of books, I must insist that the power of finding enjoyment in reading is above all price, particularly to a woman. A full mind is a great safeguard to virtue and happiness in every situation of life. Multitudes of people do wrong from mere emptiness of mind, and want of occupation.

Children should be early taught by example to listen attentively to intelligent conversation, and should afterwards be encouraged in referring to it. This will occasion a thirst for information, which will lead to a love of reading. But while you try to encourage a love of books, remember to direct their attention to other things at the same time. For instance, show your daughter at which end you begin to grate a nutmeg, and explain to her that if you began at the end once fastened to the

branch, it would grate full of holes; because the fibres which held it together were fastened at that place, and being broken, they fall out. When sewing, you can call attention to the fact, that sewing-silk may be split much better by being first drawn through the wax; and that a wristband is put on before the sleeve is sewed, because it can be managed more conveniently.

I mention these merely as familiar instances how the attention may be kept awake, and ready to devote itself to little things, as well as great. If a girl feels interested in nothing but books, she will, in all probability, be useless, or nearly so, in all the relations dearest to a good woman's heart; if, on the other hand, she gives all her attention to household matters, she will become a mere drudge, and will lose many valuable sources of enjoyment and usefulness. This may be said in favour of an over-earnest love of knowledge,—a great mind can attend to little things, but a little mind cannot attend to great things.

CHAPTER IV.

MANAGEMENT.

THIS phrase is a very broad and comprehensive one. Under it I mean to include all that relates to rewards and punishments, and the adaptation of education to different characters and dispositions.

The good old-fashioned maxim that “example is better than precept,” is the best thing to begin with. The great mistake in education is that we give *rules* instead of inspiring *sentiments*. The simple fact that your child

never saw you angry, that your voice is always gentle, and the expression of your face always kind, is worth a thousand times more than all the rules you can give him about not beating his dog, pinching his brother, &c. It is in vain to load the understanding with rules, if the affections are not pure. In the first place, it is not possible to make rules enough to apply to all manner of cases; and if it were possible, a child would soon forget them. But if you inspire him with right *feelings*, they will govern his *actions*. All our thoughts and actions come from our affections; if we love what is good, we shall think and do what is good. Children are not so much influenced by what we say and do in particular reference to them, as by the general effect of our characters and conversation. They are in a great degree creatures of imitation. If they see a mother fond of finery, they become fond of finery; if they see her selfish, it makes them selfish; if they see her extremely anxious for the attention of wealthy people, they learn to think wealth is the only good.

Those who educate their children well in infancy, will find them easy to manage as they grow older.

An infant's wants should be attended to without waiting for him to cry. At first, a babe cries merely from a sensation of pain, or of suffering,—because food, warmth, or other comforts necessary to his young existence, are withheld; but when he finds crying is the only means of attracting attention, he soon gets into the habit of crying for every thing. To avoid this, his wants should be attended to, whether he demand it or not. Food, sleep, and necessary comforts should be supplied to him at such times as the experience of his mother may dictate. If he has been sitting on the floor, playing quietly by him-

self a good while, take him up and amuse him, if you can spare time, without waiting for weariness to render him fretful. Who can blame a child for fretting and screaming, if experience has taught him that he cannot get his wants attended to in any other manner?

Young children should never be made to cry by plaguing them, for the sake of fun; it makes them seriously unhappy for the time, and has an injurious effect upon their dispositions. When in any little trouble, they should be helped as quick as possible. When their feet are caught in the bars of a chair, or their play-things entangled, or when any other of the thousand-and-one afflictions of babyhood occur, it is an easy thing to teach them to wait, by saying, "Stay a minute, and I will come to you." But do not say this to put them off; attend to them as quickly as your employments will permit; they will then wait patiently should another disaster occur. Children who have entire confidence that the simple truth is always spoken to them, are rarely troublesome.

A silent influence which they do not perceive, is better for young children than direct rules and prohibitions. For instance, should a child be in ill humour, without any apparent cause, (as will sometimes happen)—should he push down his playthings, and then cry because he has injured them—chase the kitten, and then cry because she has run out of his reach—it is injurious to take any direct notice of it, by saying, "How cross you are to-day, James! What a naughty boy you are! I don't love you to-day." This, in all probability, will make matters worse. The better way is to draw off his attention to pleasant thoughts, by saying, "I am going into the garden;" or, "I am going out to see the calf. Does James

want to go with me?" If, in the capriciousness of his humour, he says he does not want to go, do not urge him: make preparations to go, and he will soon be inclined to follow. A few flowers, or a little pleasant talk about the calf, will, in all probability, produce entire forgetfulness of his troubles. If the employment suggested to him combine usefulness with pleasure,—such as feeding the chickens, shelling pease for dinner, &c., so much the better. The habit of assisting others, excites the benevolent affections, and lays the foundation of industry.

When a little child has been playing, and perhaps quarrelling out of doors, and comes in with his face all in a blaze, sobbing and crying, it is an excellent plan to take him by the hand and say, "What is the matter, my dear boy? Tell me what is the matter. But how dirty your face is! Let me wash your face nicely, and wipe it dry, and then you shall sit in my lap and tell me all about it." If he is washed gently, the sensation will be pleasant and refreshing, and by the time the operation is finished, his attention will be drawn off from his vexations; his temper will be cooled, as well as his face. Then seat him in your lap, encourage him to tell you all about his troubles, comb his hair gently in the mean time, and in a few minutes the vexation of his little spirit will be entirely soothed. This secret of calling off the attention by little kind offices is very valuable to those who have the care of invalids, or young children. Bathing the hands and feet, or combing the hair gently, will sometimes put a sick person asleep when he can obtain rest in no other way.

An experienced and very judicious mother told me that, in the course of twenty years' experience, she had never known washing the face and combing the hair, fail to soothe an angry and tired child. But then it must be

done gently. The reason children frequently have an aversion to being washed is, that they are taken hold of roughly, and rubbed very hard. If you occasion them pain by the operation, can you wonder they dread it?

By such expedients as I have mentioned, ill-humour and discontent are driven away by the influence of kindness and cheerfulness; "evil is overcome with good." Whipping and scolding could not have produced quiet so soon; and if they could, the child's temper would have been injured in the process.

I have said that example and silent influence are better than direct rules and commands. Nevertheless, there are cases where rules must be made; and children must be taught to obey implicitly. For instance, a child must be expressly forbidden to play with fire, to climb upon the tables, &c. But whenever it is possible, restraint should be invisible.

The first and most important step in management is, that whatever a mother says, always *must* be done. For this reason, do not require too much; and on no account allow your child to do at one time, what you have forbidden him at another. Sometimes when a woman feels easy and good-natured, and does not expect any company, she will allow her children to go to the table and take lumps of sugar; but should visitors be in the room, or she be out of humour with the occurrences of the day, she will perhaps scold them, for the self-same trick. How can a mother expect obedience to commands so selfish and capricious? What inferences will a child draw from such conduct? You may smile at the idea that very young children draw inferences; but it is a fact, that they do draw inferences—and very just ones too. We mistake, when we trust too much to children's not

thinking, or observing. They are shrewd reasoners in all cases where their little interests are concerned. They know a mother's ruling passion; they soon discover her weak side, and learn how to attack it most successfully. I will relate a little anecdote, to show that children are acute observers of character. A wealthy lady, fond of dress and equipage, was the mother of a thoughtless little rogue. One day, he seized hold of a bottle of wine, which a bigger boy had placed upon the side-walk of a secluded alley, while he joined his companions in play; the little fellow persisted in striking the bottle on the pavement, for his amusement. He was repeatedly warned that he would break it, and spill the wine; and at last this did happen. His mother, being told of the mischief he had so wantonly done, immediately paid for the wine, and ordered him to be undressed and put to bed, although it was then in the middle of the day. While this operation was performed by the nursery maid, he said, "Betsy, it is my private opinion, that I should have had a whipping *if mother had not had her best gown on.*"

To return to my subject.—The necessity of obedience early instilled, is the foundation of all good management. If children see you governed by a real wish for their good, rather than by your own selfishness, or capricious freaks, they will easily acquire this excellent habit. Wilful disobedience should never go unpunished. If a little child disobeys you from mere forgetfulness and frolic, it is best to take no notice of it; for his intention is not bad, and authority has greater effect when used sparingly, and on few occasions. Should he forget the same injunction again, look at him very seriously, and tell him, that if he forgets it again, you shall be obliged to punish him. Should he commit the offence the third time, take from

him the means of committing it ; for instance, if you tell him not to tear his picture-book, and he does tear it, take it away from him. Perhaps he will pout and show ill-humour ; will push away with his little chair, and say, "I don't love you, mother." If so, take no notice. Do not laugh, for that would irritate him, without being of the least use ; do not seem offended with him, for that will awaken a love of power in his little mind. It excites very bad feelings in a child to see that he can vex a parent, and make her lose her self-command. In spite of his displeasure, therefore, continue your employment tranquilly, as if nothing had happened. If his ill-humour continue, however, and show itself in annoyances to you, and others around him, you should take him by the hand, look very seriously in his face, and say, "James, you are such a naughty boy, that I must punish you. I am very sorry to punish you ; but I must, that you may remember to be good next time." This should be done with perfect calmness, and a look of regret. When a child is punished in anger, he learns to consider it a species of revenge ; when he is punished in sorrow, he believes that it is done for his good.

The punishment for such peevishness as I have mentioned should be being tied in an arm-chair, or something of that simple nature. I do not approve of shutting the little offender in the closet. The sudden transition from light to darkness affects him with an undefined species of horror, even if he has been kept perfectly free from frightful stories. A very young child will become quite cold in a few minutes, at midsummer, if shut in a dark closet.

If the culprit is obstinate, and tries to seem as if he did not care for his punishment, let him remain in confinement

till he gets very tired; but in the mean while be perfectly calm yourself, and follow your usual occupations. You can judge by his actions, and the expression of his countenance, whether his feelings begin to soften. Seize a favourable moment, and ask him if he is sorry he has been so naughty; if he says, "Yes," let him throw himself into your arms, kiss him, and tell him you hope he will never be naughty again; for if he is you must punish him, and it makes you very sorry to punish him. Here is the key to all good management: always punish a child for wilfully disobeying you in the most trifling particular; but never punish him in anger.

I once heard a lady very pertly say, "Well, I should be ashamed of myself if I *could* punish a child when I was not angry. Any body must be very hard-hearted that can do it." Several of her companions laughed at this speech; but for myself, I saw neither wit nor wisdom in it.

The woman who punishes her child because she is angry, acts from the selfish motive of indulging her own bad passions; she who punishes because it is necessary for the child's good, acts from a generous regard to his future happiness.

As for the kind and degree of punishment, it should be varied according to the age and character of the child, and according to the nature of the offence. We must remember that very young children do not know what is right and wrong, until we explain it to them. A child should not be punished the first time he tears his picture-book, or cuts his frock. He should be told that it is very naughty, and that he must not do it again. It is well to show the torn book to his father, and other members of the family, saying, with a look of concern,

"See how George has torn his picture-book! What a pity. I am very sorry." This will impress the magnitude of the fault upon his mind, and he will not be so likely to forget it.

But should he make a grieved lip, and appear distressed at your conversation, change the current of his feelings by saying, "But I am sure he will never do such a naughty thing again. He is sorry for it." Having thus impressed his mind, do not recur to the subject again.

The form of punishment should always be as mild as it can be, to produce the desired effect. Being sent to bed in the middle of the day is a great privation; and it does not excite bad feelings so much as some other forms of punishment. Little children may be tied in an arm-chair, or sent out of the room and forbidden to return. Eating dinner separate from the family, or not being allowed to kiss their father and mother, is a grievous penance to children of sensibility. Privation of any expected pleasure usually makes a deep impression.

Where it is possible, it is a good plan to make the punishment similar to the offence. If a child is quarrelsome, or mischievous, among his companions, make him play in a room by himself. If he is studying with others, and chooses to be very disobliging, or annoying, send him to another room to study alone; or, if this is not convenient, make him sit at a table by himself, and allow no one to speak to him during the evening. His offences having been anti-social, his punishment should be so likewise. Being deprived of social intercourse will teach him its value.

If a child abuse any good thing, it is well to take it from him, and make him feel the want of it. Thus if he abuse your confidence, do not trust him again for some

time. But if he is really repentant, restore it to him; and when you do trust him, trust him entirely. Allusions to former faults have a disheartening effect, particularly on sensitive, affectionate children.

Above all things, never suffer a child to be accused of a fault, until you are perfectly sure he has been guilty of it. If he is innocent, the idea that you could think him capable of wickedness will distress him, and will, in some degree, weaken the strength of his virtue. I would rather lose the Pitt diamond, if it were mine, than let an innocent child know he had been for one moment suspected of stealing it. The conscious dignity of integrity should always be respected and kept entire.

While speaking of punishments, I would suggest one caution. Never undertake to make a child do a thing unless you are very sure you can make him do it. One instance of successful resistance to parental authority will undo the effects of a year's obedience. If you see that a child is determined to refuse obedience, it is better to put an end to the contest by saying, "If you do not do as I have desired within two minutes, I will not allow you to do it at all to-day." This will generally be found a sufficient punishment, and prevent resistance to your commands for the future. But if a boy is too bad to be governed by any other means than flogging, and is too strong for you, do not attempt to manage him: tell his father, or his guardians, of his disobedience, and request them to punish him.

Unfounded fears should on no occasion be used as a preventive, or a punishment. If children want any thing improper for them to have, do not tell them it will bite them. It is not true; and the youngest child will soon learn by experience that it is not true. This will teach

him to disbelieve you, when you really do tell the truth, and will soon make a liar of him. Care should be taken not to inspire a terror of animals, such as beetles, mice, spiders, &c. Fortunately we have no venomous creatures in England, as there are in some countries, which are likely to infest the nursery. As for wasps or gnats, they are quite as likely to sting a child who is afraid of them, as one who is not; and if such a thing should happen, a little swelling, and a few hours' pain, are not half so bad as fear, that troubles one all his life long. Children would seldom have fear of animals, unless it were put into their heads. A little girl of my acquaintance once came running in with a striped snake, exclaiming, "Oh, what a beautiful creature I have found!" Her mother acknowledged that she shuddered, because she had herself been taught to fear snakes; but she knew the creature would not hurt her daughter, and she would not allow herself to express any horror; she merely advised her to set the animal at liberty.

Not to allow of killing any animal, seems to me an excess of a good feeling. The vermin that infest our houses and gardens must be destroyed, and perhaps children must see them destroyed. It should always be done as mercifully as possible; and they had better not be encouraged to stand by, and still less should they be allowed to be actors in the work. The explanation that we kill them to prevent the evil they would do, is very good, and very satisfactory. But the fact is, there are very few creatures in this climate which do us harm; more than half our aversions to animals are mere prejudices.

However, they are not evils which can be seen, met, and understood, that usually frighten children. A child is told that fire will burn him if he touches it, and if he has been

accustomed to hear the truth, he believes it; but he will stay in the room where there is a fire without fear; for he knows by experience, that the fire cannot come to him. But they are frightened with mysterious ideas of something in the dark,—with stories of old men prowling about to steal them,—rats and mice that will come and bite them, when they are shut up in the closet, &c.

I cannot find language strong enough to express what a woman deserves, who imbitters the whole existence of her offspring by filling their minds with such terrific images. She who can tell a frightful story to her child, or allow one to be told, ought to have a guardian appointed over herself.

Let us examine what the motives must be, that lead to such measures. It is indolence,—pure indolence; a mother is not willing to take the pains, and practise the self-denial, which firm and gentle management requires; she therefore terrifies her child into obedience. She implants in his mind a principle that will, in all probability, make him more or less wretched through his whole life, merely to save herself a few moments' trouble! Very strong minds may overcome, or nearly overcome, early impressions of this kind; but in cases of weak nerves, or acute natural sensibility, it is utterly impossible to calculate the extent of the evil. And all this to save a little trouble! What selfishness!

However, Divine Providence has so ordered it, that whatever is wrong, is really bad *policy*, as well as bad *morality*. "Lazy people *must* take the most pains" in the end. Fill your children with fears to make them obedient, and those very fears become your tyrants. They cannot go into the dark without you; and you must sit by their

bedside till sleep relieves them from terror. All this is the consequence of avoiding a little trouble in the beginning.

The management of children should vary according to their character. A very active mind, full of restless curiosity, does not need to be excited; but a feeble or sluggish character should be aroused, as much as possible, by external means. For instance, if there is any wonderful sight to be seen in the neighbourhood, such as a caravan of animals, a striking picture, wonderful mechanism, &c., and if it be inconvenient for you to take more than one of the children under your care, let the treat be given to the one whose character most needs to be aroused. Of course, I do not mean that *lazy* children should be entertained, in preference to industrious ones; I mean where there is a pre-disposition to dulness, owing to early disease, an afflicted state of his mother's mind before his birth, or while nursing him, &c.;—in such cases, the thoughts and affections should be excited with an extraordinary degree of care. A timid child should be encouraged more than a bold and confident one; and if it be necessary to punish him, means should be used as little likely to break his spirit as possible. A boy whose perceptions are slow, and who learns with labour and difficulty, should be indulged in reading a new book, or attending to a new branch of study, which particularly interests him; but a boy of quick perceptions, and ready memory, should be kept at one thing as long as possible. Such different characters are in danger of totally different defects. One is in danger of never getting his mind interested in knowledge, and the other of getting so much interested in every thing, that he will learn nothing well; therefore they should be managed in a manner entirely opposite.

The same rule holds good with regard to the affections : cultivate most those faculties and good feelings, which appear to be of the slowest growth. If a love of power early develop itself in one member of your family with more strength than in the others, subject that child to more restraint than you do the others. But in checking him, do not yourself act from a love of power: explain to him, at every step, that you govern him thus strictly, only to assist him in overcoming a great evil. If you really act from this motive, your child will perceive it to be true, and will respect you.

There is such an immense variety in human character, that it is impossible to give rules adapted to all cases. The above hints will explain my general meaning; and observation and experience will enable a judicious mother to apply them with wisdom and kindness. I will merely add to what I have said, the old proverb, that "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." If a child has any evil disposition which is particularly strong, it is far better to avoid exciting it, than to punish it when it is excited. Whatever measure of punishment or other consequence may follow the commission of an improper act, the evil propensity in which it originated always gains fresh power over us by every instance of indulgence. As much as possible keep a young child out of the way of temptation which it is peculiarly hard for him to resist; and by reading, by conversation, by caresses, make him in love with the opposite good; when once his *feelings* are right on the subject, temptation will do him good instead of harm.

When a child is to be punished, he should always be told calmly, "I am obliged to do this for your good. If I do not punish you, you will not remember next time.

You have promised two or three times to do as I bade you, but you always forget it; now I must make you suffer a little, that you may remember it."

A very young child can understand and appreciate this management. I knew a girl of five years old, who had the habit of biting her nails so close, that her fingers were perpetually inflamed. Her mother had tried arguments, and various privations, without producing much effect. One day, the child, as usual, put her fingers to her mouth, to bite her nails; but suddenly withdrawing them, she came up to her mother's writing-table, and said, "Mother, slap my hand smartly with your ruler every time I bite my nails, and then I shall remember." Her mother did as she was desired, saying, "I hope you will remember now, and that I shall never have to do this again." The girl winced a little,—for her mother did slap her smartly, though but a very few times; but she seemed perfectly satisfied, and said, "I think that will make me remember it." For several days afterward, if she moved her fingers to her mouth, she would look at the writing-table and smile; and if her mother perceived her, she would hold up her finger in a cautioning manner, and smile also. All this was done in perfect good-nature on both sides. After a while she forgot herself, and bit her nails again; her mother was not in the room; but she went, of her own accord, and avowed the fact, saying, "Mother give me a few more slaps than you did before; and see if that will make me remember it any longer." After that she never needed correction for the same fault. This little girl understood the real *use* of punishment; she did not look upon it as a sign of anger, but as a means of helping her to overcome what was wrong.

Mere fear of suffering never makes people really better.

It makes them *conceal* what is evil, but it does not make them *conquer* it. They must be taught to dislike what is wrong merely because it is wrong, and to look upon punishment as a means to help them to get rid of it.

Do sickness, and misery, and ruin deter the vicious from the commission of sin? Is not theft indulged at the very foot of the gallows? If a man do not hate what is wrong, the mere fear of consequences will never cleanse his heart, though it may regulate his outward behaviour; and what will mere outward goodness avail him in another world, where there is no possibility of concealment, or hypocrisy? What the child is, the man will probably be; therefore never make the avoidance of punishment a *reason* for avoiding sin.

Having mentioned that a mother slapped her little girl smartly, I shall very naturally be asked if I approve of whipping. I certainly do not approve of its very frequent use; still I am not prepared to say that it is not the best punishment for some dispositions, and in some particular cases. I do not believe that most children, properly brought up from the very cradle, would need whipping; but children are not often thus brought up; and you may have those placed under your care in whom evil feelings have become very strong. I think whipping should be resorted to only when the same wrong thing has been done over and over again, and when gentler punishments have failed. A few smart slaps sometimes do good when nothing else will; but particular care should be taken not to correct in anger.

Punishments which make a child ashamed should be avoided. A sense of degradation is not healthy for the character. It is a very bad plan for children to be brought into a room before strangers with a foolscap, or some bad

name, fastened upon them. Indeed, I think strangers should have as little as possible to do with the education of children. To be either praised, or mortified, before company, makes us care too much about the opinion of others.

I do not, however, mean to inculcate a defiance or contempt of public opinion. It is true that, like other human laws, it does not pretend to reach the heart, or the conscience, or to found itself upon the highest or the purest motives. It is very difficult to define and very changeable, and, therefore, a most unsafe guide; but it may be made extremely useful as a secondary aid. For it may often happen that when the strength of our evil inclinations has so far perverted our moral sense, as to make us call evil good, our error will be reformed, by recollecting what judgment would be pronounced upon the case, by an impartial and respected friend. In this way the opinion of others becomes most valuable, as a test of the truth and sincerity of the conclusions of our own conscience, with reference to the moral law which we profess, and is made the means of preventing deviations from the truth, by any bias of our own interests or passions. In the same way that we are assisted in maintaining the uprightness of our bodily frames, by constantly comparing our position with that of the surrounding objects.

It is moreover a kindly, social, and virtuous disposition of mind, to be made happy by the approbation of others, when sanctioned by its accordance with the law of God. But if we do right, merely in order that others may approve of it, without reference to any higher principle, we shall gradually lose the perception of what is right, and readily adopt whatever folly and sin are fashionable.

Nothing is a safe guide but the honest convictions of

our own hearts. A good man *will* always be respected ; but he cannot become really good by endeavouring to be so, in order that he may be respected for it. Indeed those who have been taught no holier motive than that of gaining the good opinion of others, rarely succeed in permanently keeping what they covet so much. The *heart* is not right ; and however clean they may try to keep the outside, at some unlucky moment hypocrisy will fail them, and their real character will peep through.

You may tell a cross, discontented-looking girl that the world would like her face a great deal better, if it were cheerful and benevolent ; but tell her, at the same time, that the mere selfish wish to be pleasing will not enable her to alter the expression of her face, and that she must begin with her *heart*, and religiously drive from thence all unkind and discontented feelings.

What a change would take place in the world, if men were always governed by internal principle ! If they would make pure the hidden fountain, the light might shine upon the wandering stream, and find it clear and stainless in all its windings !

I have heard parents say to children, " If you don't get your lessons better, you will grow up a dunce, and *everybody will laugh at you.*" The thing to which they are urged is good, but the motive is wrong. If young people are taught to regulate their actions by a dread of the world's laugh, they will be full as likely to be deterred from good as from evil. It would be much better to say, " If you grow up in ignorance, you cannot *do half so much good* in the world, as you can if you gain all the knowledge in your power. Now, while you are young, is the best time to fit yourself for being useful."

I once heard a boy say, " Well, mother, I have had a good

ride to-day. Last week I told a man one of his waggon wheels was coming off; and when I was walking home from school to-day, the same man overtook me, and asked me to get in and ride. You always told me, *if I helped others, they would help me.*" This is a common case. Parents are in the habit of telling children, "If you will be good, you will probably *lose nothing by it*:" but care must be taken, that in saying this, we do not poison the act in the motive. It is not true that we always meet a return for kindness and generosity; they who expect it will be disappointed; and, not being accustomed to act from any better motive, they will cease to be benevolent, except when they are sure of reward. We should look for the recompense of goodness in our own hearts; there we shall certainly find it. The reward is *in* keeping the commandments, not *for* keeping them. It is quite true that a secondary blessing of temporal reward does usually attend obedience, and the hope of it may be held forth as a consolation, provided it be not so held out that the disappointment shall be a source of grief.

Children should be induced to kindness by such motives as the following: "God is very good to us, and ought we not to be so to others? The Bible tells us to do to others as we would be done by; and you know very well how pleasant it is, when you are in trouble, to have other people pity you, and help you. When you do good to others, does it not make you very happy?"

People sometimes double a boy's lesson because he has not behaved well. This is a very bad plan. If his book is used as a punishment, how can you expect him to love it? For the same reason, never tell a child he shall stay at home from school if he is good; this gives him the idea that going to school is a task. On the contrary,

make all his associations with school as pleasant as possible. Speak of the kindness of the instructor in taking so much pains to teach him ; encourage him in telling you about what he has learned ; show pleasure at the progress he makes ; and tell him how useful he will be when he is a man, if he continues so industrious and persevering.

It is a rule with many judicious parents, and it is a very safe rule, never to offer money as a reward for doing right. Money and praise become so necessary if children are once habituated to them, that they cease to have the power of acting without some selfish excitement. When given as outward marks of the approbation of a parent or teacher who takes care that they shall not be estimated beyond their true value, they may be useful and harmless, but they are dangerous tools in unskilful hands. Money is the worse stimulus of the two ; for avarice is more contemptible and injurious in its effects than a too earnest desire for the good opinion of others.

At the same time guard against wastefulness and prodigality. Teach children to be very economical—never to cut up good pieces of calico, or paper, for no purpose—never to tear old picture-books, destroy old playthings, burn twine, or spend every penny they receive for cake and sugar-plums. But as a reason for not destroying, tell them these things will come into *use*. Encourage your child in laying up money to buy an orange for a sick neighbour, a pair of shoes for a poor boy, or a present to surprise his sister on her birth-day ; any thing, no matter what, that is not for himself alone. He will thus learn the value of money, without becoming selfish.

To avoid the danger of engrafting avarice upon habits of care, earnestly encourage children to be generous in

giving and lending to each other; and show peculiar delight when they voluntarily share any thing of which they are particularly fond. If a child has in any way acquired a tendency to parsimony, take extraordinary pains to make him feel happy when he has been generous. Praise him even more than you would think safe under any other circumstances, taking care always to suggest, at the same time, the higher motive of obedience to God's law of love, and trusting to that happy constitution of our better nature, which will cause him to feel a delight in every act of social virtue, so that by repetition of such acts, he will gradually learn to love generosity for its own sake.

Habits of carelessness, such as leaving things lying about, blotting their books, reciting in a jumbled manner, or jumping hastily at incorrect conclusions, &c., should be resolutely and promptly checked in children. Defects of this sort are the origin of numerous evils. Many a failure in business, many a disordered household, may be traced to the indulgence of these habits in early life. I speak feelingly on this subject; for years of self-education have hardly yet enabled me to cure the evil. I have made mistakes both in conversation and writing, concerning things which I knew perfectly well, merely from an early habit of heedlessness. It has cost me much mortification and many tears; punishments which certainly have improved my habits, and may, in time, cure them.

No single instance of carelessness should be overlooked. If a little girl cannot find her gloves, or her bonnet, when you are about to take a walk, oblige her to stay at home. Let no tears and entreaties induce you to excuse it. I dare say, it may sometimes be painful to you to pursue this

course ; but for your child's sake, have resolution enough to do it.

If a boy loses his book, and cannot therefore prepare his lesson at the usual time, see that he is deprived of his play-hours in order to learn it. If he habitually forgets his book, send him back to school for it, even if it be cold weather, and a great distance.

These small cruelties in the beginning will save a great deal of future suffering. In order to leave no excuse for carelessness, children should be provided with a proper place for every thing, and taught always to put it there, as soon as they have done using it.

Perhaps there is no evil, into which children so easily and so universally fall, as that of saying what is not true ; and it must be observed, that this vice is of two kinds, which, although frequently confounded, ought, by all means, to be kept distinct, as they require very different treatment.

The imaginations of children are often very quick and lively, so that they mistake their mental impressions for realities. We are entertained with these hallucinations, and often give them thoughtless encouragement, till the child loses altogether the power of distinguishing truth from falsehood. The habit thus acquired, is continually mistaken for the moral offence of wilful falsehood, and is maltreated accordingly. It should never be forgotten that a child's perceptions of realities, are not so accurate as those of more experienced persons, and allowance should be made accordingly.

With respect to wilful falsehood, the temptation to it is strong, and the encouragement to veracity should be proportionably strong. If a child breaks any thing and honestly avows it, do not be angry with him. If candour

procures a scolding, besides the strong effort it naturally costs, depend upon it, he will soon be discouraged. In such cases, do not speak till you can control yourself—say, “I am glad you told me. It was a very valuable article, and I am truly sorry it is broken; but it would have grieved me much more to have had my son deceive me.” And having said this, do not reproachfully allude to the accident afterward. I was about to say that children should *never* be punished for what was honestly avowed; but, perhaps, there may be *some* cases where they will do again and again what they know to be wrong, from the idea that an avowal will excuse them; in this case, they tell the truth from policy, not from conscience; and they should be reasoned with, and punished. However, it is the safe side to forgive a good deal, rather than run any risk of fostering habits of deception.

Should you, at any time, discover your child in a wilful lie, treat it with great solemnity. Let him see that it grieves you, and strikes you with horror, as the worst of all possible faults. Do not restore him to your confidence and affection, until you see his heart is really touched by repentance. If falsehood becomes a habit with him, do not tempt him to make up stories, by asking him to detail all the circumstances connected with the affair he has denied. Listen coldly to what he says, and let him see by your manner, that you do not ask him questions, because you have not the least confidence in his telling the truth. But remember to encourage, as well as discourage. Impress upon his mind that God will help him to get rid of the evil propensity, if he really wishes to get rid of it, and prays for the divine help in his endeavours to do so; and that every temptation he overcomes will make it more easy to overcome the next. Receive any evidence of his

truth and integrity with delight and affection ; let him see that your heart is full of joy that he has gained one victory over so great a fault.

Let your family never hear trifling deceptions glossed over by any excuses ; speak of them with unlimited abhorrence and contempt.

Above all things, let your own habits be of the strictest truth. Examine closely ! You will be surprised to find in how many little things we all act insincerely. I have at this moment in my memory a friend, who probably would be very indignant to be told she did not speak the truth ; and I dare say, on all that she deemed important occasions, she might be relied on ; yet she did deceive her children. True, she thought it was for their good ; but that was a mistake of hers ; deception never produces good. I one evening saw her remove a plate of plum-cake from the tea-table to the closet. Her youngest daughter asked for a piece ; the reply was, " It is all gone. Puss came and ate it up ; " at the same time the mother winked to a little girl, two or three years older, not to *tell* that she had seen her put it into the closet. There is an old proverb about killing two birds with one stone—here two daughters were injured by one lie. The youngest was deceived, and the oldest was taught to participate in the deception. Mere experience would soon teach the little girl that the cat did not eat the cake ; and having found that her mother would lie, she would lose all confidence in her, and would find more encouragement to evil, in this single example, than she would of dissuasion from it, in all the precepts that could be inculcated, during the whole course of her education. And after all, what use is there in resorting to such degrading expedients ? Why not tell the child, " The plum-cake is in the closet ; but it is not

good for you at night, and I shall not give you a piece until morning"? If she had been properly educated, this would have satisfied her; or, if not, the opportunity should have been embraced of teaching her to pay proper deference to her mother's judgment and wishes.

A respect for the property of others must be taught children; for until they are instructed, they have very loose ideas upon the subject. The right of property is the right of excluding our fellow-creatures from the enjoyment of things, which are otherwise granted by God freely for the use of all. It is the basis of all industry, and therefore indispensable to all civil society; but the idea is not natural to children, though very quickly apprehended by them as applicable to their own possessions, and from thence easily transferred to the possessions of others. This idea being once established, children should be constantly encouraged to be generous in lending and giving to each other; but they should be taught a scrupulous regard for the property of others. They should never use each other's things, without first asking, "Brother, may I have your slate?" "Sister, may I have your book?" &c. They should be taught to put them carefully in their places, when they have done using them; and should be impressed with the idea that it is a greater fault to injure another's property, than to be careless of our own. If any little barter has been made, and a dispute afterwards arises, hear both sides with perfect impartiality, and allow no departure from what was promised in the bargain. From such little things as these, children receive their first ideas of honesty and justice.

Some children, from errors in early management, retain the notion that they may have every thing they see. They even tease their friends for things which it would be impos-

sible to give them. A child properly managed will seldom ask twice for what you have once told him he should not have. But if you have the care of one who has acquired this habit, the best way to cure him of it is never to give him what he asks for, whether his request is proper or not ; but at the same time be careful to give him such things as he likes, (provided they are proper for him,) when he does not ask for them. This will soon break him of the habit of teasing.

I have said much in praise of gentleness. I cannot say too much. Its effects are beyond calculation, both on the affections and the understanding. The victims of oppression and abuse are generally stupid, as well as selfish and hard-hearted. How can we wonder at it? They are all the time excited to evil passions, and nobody encourages what is good in them. We might as well expect flowers to grow amid the cold and storms of winter.

But gentleness, important as it is, is not all that is required in education. There should be united with it firmness—great firmness. Commands should be reasonable, and given in perfect kindness ; but once given, it should be known that they must be obeyed. I heard a lady once say, “For my part, I cannot be so very strict with my children. I love them too much to punish them every time they disobey me.” I will relate a scene which took place in her family. She had but one domestic, and at the time to which I allude, she was very busy preparing for company. Her children knew by experience that when she was in a hurry she would indulge them in any thing for the sake of having them out of the way. George began, “Mother, I want a piece of mince-pie.” The answer was, “It is nearly bed-time ; and mince-pie will hurt you. You shall have a piece of cake, if you will sit

down and be still." The boy ate his cake ; and liking the system of being hired to sit still, he soon began again, " Mother, I want a piece of mince-pie." The old answer was repeated. The child stood his ground, " Mother, I want a piece of mince-pie—I *want* a piece—I *want* a piece," was repeated incessantly. " Will you leave off teasing, if I give you a piece?" " Yes, I will, indeed." A small piece was given, and soon devoured. With his mouth half full, he began again, " I want another piece—I want another piece." " No, George ; I shall not give you another mouthful. Go, sit down, you naughty boy. You alway act the worst when I am going to have company." George continued his teasing ; and at last said, " If you don't give me another piece, I'll roar." This threat not being attended to, he kept his word. Upon this, the mother seized him by the shoulder, and shook him angrily, saying, " Hold your tongue, you naughty boy !" " I will if you will give me another piece of pie," said he. Another small piece was given him, after he had promised that he certainly would not tease any more. As soon as he had eaten it, he, of course, began again ; and with the additional threat, " If you don't give me a piece, I will roar after the company comes, so loud that they can all hear me." The end of all this was, that the boy had a sound whipping, was put to bed, and could not sleep all night, because the mince-pie made his stomach ache. What an accumulation of evils in this little scene ! His health injured,—his promises broken with impunity,—his mother's promises broken,—the knowledge gained that he could always vex her when she was in a hurry,—and that he could gain what he would by teasing. He always acted upon the same plan afterwards ; for he only once in a while (when he made his mother very angry) got a

whipping; but he was *always* sure to obtain what he asked for, if he teased her long enough. His mother told him the plain truth, when she said the mince-pie would hurt him; but he did not know whether it was the truth, or whether she only said it to put him off; for he knew that she did sometimes deceive. (She was the woman who said the cat had eaten the cake.) When she gave him the pie, he had reason to suppose it was not true it would hurt him—else why should a kind mother give it to her child? Had she told him that if he asked a second time, she would put him to bed directly—and had she kept her promise, in spite of entreaties,—she would have saved him a whipping, and herself a great deal of unnecessary trouble. And who can calculate all the whippings, and all the trouble, she would have spared herself and him? I do not remember ever being in her house half a day, without witnessing some scene of contention with the children.

Now let me introduce you to another acquaintance. She was in precisely the same situation, having a comfortable income and one domestic; but her children were much more numerous, and she had had very limited advantages for education. Yet she managed her family better than any woman I ever saw, or ever expect to see again. I will relate a scene I witnessed there, by way of contrast to the one I have just described. Myself and several friends once entered her parlour unexpectedly, just as the family were seated at the supper-table. A little girl, about four years old, was obliged to be removed, to make room for us. Her mother assured her she should have her supper in a very little while, if she was a good girl. The child cried; and the guests insisted that room should be made for her at table. "No," said the mother;

"I have told her she must wait ; and if she cries, I shall be obliged to send her to bed. If she is a good little girl, she shall have her supper directly." The child could not make up her mind to obey ; and her mother led her out of the room, and gave orders that she should be put to bed without supper. When my friend returned, her husband said, "Hannah, that was a hard case. The poor child lost her supper, and was agitated by the presence of strangers. I could hardly refrain from taking her on my knee, and giving her some supper. Poor little thing ! But I never will interfere with your management ; and much as it went against my feelings, I entirely approve of what you have done." "It cost me a struggle," replied his wife ; "but I know it is for the good of the child to be taught that I mean exactly what I say."

This family was the most harmonious, affectionate, happy family I ever knew. The children were managed as easily as a flock of lambs. After a few unsuccessful attempts at disobedience, when very young, they gave it up entirely ; and always cheerfully acted from the conviction that their mother knew best. This family was governed with great strictness ; firmness was united with gentleness. The indulgent mother, who said she loved her children too much to punish them, was actually obliged to punish them ten times as much as the strict mother did.

The husband's remark leads me to say something of the great importance of a perfect union between husband and wife. A want of this in education is like mildew in spring. A mother should never object to a father's punishing a child when he thinks proper ; at least she should not do so before the child. Suggestions to each other may, of course, be made in all the freedom of mutual

respect and affection. One parent should never allow a child to do what the other has forbidden; no expression of disapprobation concerning management should ever be made by either party, except when alone. A young child ought never to suspect it is possible for his parents to think differently concerning any point in his education. Perhaps you will ask, whether, after all I have said in praise of truth, I approve of concealment and deception in this particular? But you will please to recollect it is not *truth* which I advise to have concealed in this instance; it is only *a difference of opinion*. The child, not being old enough to understand the reasons why his parents differ, cannot receive any good from the discussion. Implicit obedience is the first law of childhood. The simple belief that their parents know what is best, is all the light children have to follow, at first. If they see that their parents do not agree between themselves as to what is right, it naturally weakens their confidence, and makes them uncertain which of the two they ought to obey. "My dear, I do not approve of your management,"—or, "I should not have allowed him to do as you have done,"—or, "Your father may approve of it, but I do not,"—are very improper and injurious expressions. If you differ in your ideas of education, take a proper opportunity to discuss the matter in freedom and kindness; but do not weaken the respect of your children by expressing doubts of each other's good judgment in their presence. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the bad effects of discord between parents; and the blessed influence of domestic union may well be compared to a band of guardian angels protecting innocence from all evil things.

If your marriage has been an unfortunate one—if the influence of a father may not be trusted—or if he delights

in thwarting your well-meant endeavours—I know not what to say. If patience, humility and love, cannot win him to a sense of duty, the only thing you can do, is to redouble your vigilance for the good of your children, and as far as possible withdraw them from his influence. Until it becomes an imperious duty, never speak of a parent's errors ; unless there is great danger of their being imitated, let a thick veil rest upon them. But why should I dwell upon a case so unnatural, so wretched, and so hopeless ? If such be your unhappy lot, pray to God, and he will give you light to make the path of duty clear before you. In such a case, He alone can help you.

CHAPTER V.

PLAYTHINGS.—AMUSEMENTS.—EMPLOYMENTS.

IN infancy, the principal object is to find such toys as are at once attractive and safe. During the painful process of teething, a roll of Indian rubber is good, on account of the ease it gives the gums ; it should be fastened to a string,—but not a green one, or any other from which a babe can suck the colour. Painted toys are not safe at this age, when children are so prone to convey every thing to the mouth. An ivory ring or a bunch of keys are favourite playthings with babies. Indeed any thing they can move about, and cause to produce a noise, is pleasant to them. I have seen infants amuse themselves, for hours, with a string of very large wooden beads, or shining buttons ; perhaps it is needless to say that no buttons but steel, wood, or ivory, are safe ; if they have any portion of brass

about them, they are injurious: another caution, which perhaps may be thought equally unnecessary, is, that playthings small enough to be swallowed should be tied together with a very strong string, from which no colour can be extracted. When children are a few months older, blocks of wood, which can be heaped up and knocked down at pleasure, become favourite playthings. Such toys are a great deal better than expensive ones. I do not think it a good plan to give children old almanacs, pamphlets, &c., to tear up. How can they distinguish between the value of one book and another? Children who have been allowed to tear worthless books, may tear good ones, without the least idea that they are doing any harm.

As soon as it is possible to convey instruction by toys, it is well to choose such as will be useful. The letters of the alphabet, on pieces of bone, are excellent for this purpose. I have known a child of six years old teach a baby-brother to read quite well, merely by playing with his ivory letters. In all that relates to developing the intellect, very young children should not be hurried or made to attend unwillingly. When they are playing with their letters, and you are at leisure, take pains to tell them the name of each one, as often as they ask; but do not urge them. No matter if it takes them three weeks to learn one letter; they will not want their knowledge in a hurry. When the large letters are learned, give them the small ones. When both are mastered, place the letters together in some small word, such as CAT; point to the letters, name them, and pronounce *cat* distinctly.

After a few lessons, the child will know what letters to place together in order to spell CAT. Do not try to teach him a new word, until he is perfectly master of the old one; and do not try to force his attention to his letters,

when he is weary, fretful and sleepy, or impatient to be doing something else. In this, as indeed in all other respects, an infant's progress is abundantly more rapid, if taught by a brother, or sister, nearly of his own age. The reason is, that their little minds are in much the same state as their pupil's. But this should be done merely as play, not as a task either for teacher or learner; and great care should be taken that the elder child does not domineer over the younger. Incalculable and irremediable mischief to both children, is sometimes occasioned by the tyranny of one over the other. Among instructive toys may be ranked balls arranged together so as to be counted.

Every step of infantile progress should be encouraged, by expressions of pleasure. When a child is able to spell a new word, or count a new number, kiss him, and show delight at his improvement. Benjamin West relates that his mother kissed him eagerly, when he showed her a likeness he had sketched of his baby-sister; and he adds, "*That kiss made me a painter!*"

I have before shown that the same rule applies to the affections,—that it is better to encourage what is right, than to punish what is wrong. Nothing strengthens a child in goodness, or enables him to overcome a fault, so much as seeing his efforts excite a sudden and earnest expression of love and joy.

For children of two or three years old, pictures are great sources of amusement and instruction. Engravings of animals on large cards are very good things. It is a great object to have proportion observed; if a child have a very small picture of an elephant, and a very large one of a mouse, it will lead him to the conclusion that a mouse is as large as an elephant. Children should be encouraged in talking about the engravings they look at; and the

different parts should be pointed out and explained to them. Thus if a palm-tree is placed near the picture of an elephant, the attention should be drawn to it, and it should be explained to them that it is not the picture of any tree in this country, but that in Asia and Africa, where elephants live, palm-trees are very common. If a child is old enough to understand it, some account of this useful tree may be given advantageously; he can be told that it yields palm-oil, palm-wine, that its leaves are manufactured into fans, &c. But if he is not old enough to feel interested in such an account, do not trouble him with it. The object of pointing out all the details of an engraving, and explaining them, when they differ from what he is accustomed to see, is merely to give *habits of observation*, and arouse a spirit of inquiry.

I think it is very important that disproportioned, badly-drawn pictures, should not be placed in the hands of children. No matter how coarse or common they are, but let them be correct imitations of nature; if they are graceful, as well as correct, so much the better. Good taste, I am aware, is of less consequence than good moral or social feelings, good principles, and good sense; but it certainly is of consequence, and should not uselessly be perverted or destroyed. I believe the sort of pictures children are accustomed to see have an important effect in forming their taste. The very beggar-boys of Italy will observe a defect in the proportions of a statue, or a picture; and the reason is, that fine sculpture and paintings are in their churches, and about their streets.

Playthings that children make for themselves are a great deal better than those which are bought for them. The children understand more about them, and employ them a much longer time; they exercise ingenuity, and really please

more. A little girl had better fashion her cups and saucers of acorns, than have a set of earthen ones supplied. A boy takes ten times more pleasure in a little wooden cart which he has pegged together, than he would in a painted and gilded carriage bought from the toy-shop; and I do not believe any expensive rocking-horse ever gave so much satisfaction as I have seen a child in the country take with a long-necked pumpkin, which he had bridled and placed on four sticks. There is a peculiar satisfaction in inventing things for one's-self. No matter if the construction be clumsy and awkward; it employs time (which is a great object in childhood), and the pleasure the invention gives is the first impulse to ingenuity and skill. For this reason, the making of little boats, and mechanical toys, should not be discouraged; but children should always be encouraged, as much as possible, to finish what they have once begun; and when any difficulty occurs, above their powers, assistance should be cheerfully given. If the parents are able to explain the principles on which machines are constructed, the advantage will be tenfold.

Cutting figures in paper is a harmless and useful amusement for those who are old enough to be trusted with scissors; which, by the way, should always be blunt-pointed, when placed in the hands of a very young child. Any glaring disproportion in the figures should be explained to a child, and he should be encouraged to make his little imitations as much like nature as possible. There was lately a little boy in Boston, who at two years old took a great fancy to cutting figures in paper. In the course of six or eight years, he actually wore out five or six pair of scissors in the service. He cut with astonishing rapidity, and apparently without any thought; yet he would produce little landscapes, or groups, as beautiful and spirited

as the best engravings. At first he began by copying things which he had before him; but he afterwards attained to so much skill, that he easily invented his own designs. This talent enabled him to do a great deal for the support of his parents, who were not rich.

Drawing figures on a slate is a favourite amusement with children; and it may prove a very useful one, if pains are taken to point out errors, and induce them to make correct imitations. Young people should be taught that it is not well to be careless in doing even the most trifling things—that whatever is worthy of being done at all, is worthy of being done well.

Some distinguished writers on education have objected to dolls, as playthings which lead to a love of dress and finery. I do not consider them in this light. If a mother's influence does not foster a love of finery, I think there is very little danger of its being produced by dressing dolls. I like these toys for various reasons. They afford a quiet amusement; they exercise ingenuity in cutting garments, and neatness in sewing; they can be played with in a vast variety of ways; and so far as they exercise the affections, their influence is innocent and pleasant. No doubt dolls sometimes excite very strong affection. Miss Hamilton tells of a little girl, who had a limb amputated at the hospital. She bore the operation with great fortitude, hugging her doll in her arms all the time. When it was completed, the Surgeon playfully said, "Now let me cut off your doll's leg." This speech produced a torrent of tears, and the little creature could hardly be pacified. She had borne her own sufferings patiently, but she could not endure that her doll should be hurt. I know that this tenderness for inanimate things is not the best employment for the affections; but so far as it goes,

it is good; and it leads naturally and necessarily to their developement upon more worthy objects. For the same reason, and in a similar degree, I think pet animals have a good effect; but care should be taken to choose such as are happy in a domesticated state. I cannot think it is right to keep creatures, accustomed to unrestrained freedom, confined in cages and boxes; no pleasure can be good, which is so entirely selfish. Yet there are some creatures, such as Canary Birds, kept in a house in northern climates, which seem to have a very happy existence, and which could not exist at all here, if they were not so kept.

It is a benefit to children to have the care of feeding animals, such as lambs, chickens, &c. It answers two good purposes—it excites kindness, and a love of usefulness.

Amusements and employments which lead to exercise in the open air have greatly the advantage of all others. In this respect, I would make no difference between the management of boys and girls. Gardening, sliding, skating, and snow-balling*, are all as good for girls as for boys. Are not health and cheerful spirits as necessary for one as the other? It is a universal remark, that American women are less vigorous and rosy than women of other climates; and that they are peculiarly subject to disorders of the chest and the spine. I believe the sole reason of this is, that their employments and amusements lead them so little into the open air. It is the same in England, with respect to women brought up in towns, as compared with those brought up in the country.

I am aware that many people object to such plays as I have recommended to girls, from the idea that they will make them rude and noisy. I do not believe this would

* Many mothers would doubtless prefer the substitution of trundling a hoop, skipping, &c.—*Ed.*

be the case, if the tone of manners within doors was gentle and polite ; and even if there were any danger of this sort, how much easier it is to acquire elegance in after-life, than it is to regain health ! When it is considered what a loss of usefulness, as well as comfort, is attendant upon ill health, I think all will agree that a vigorous constitution is the greatest of earthly blessings.

When I say that skating and sliding are proper amusements for girls, I do not, of course, mean that they should mix in a public crowd. Such sports, when girls unite in them, should be confined to the inmates of the house, and away from all possibility of contact with the rude and vicious. Under these circumstances, a girl's manners cannot be injured by such wholesome recreations. To roll snow-balls, or slide, with well-behaved brothers every day, cannot, I am sure, tend to make a girl rude and boisterous. The following has been mentioned as a very striking instance of this ; and no doubt the memory of my readers will supply similar proofs. Mrs. John Adams, wife of the second President of the United States, and mother of the sixth, was very remarkable for the elegance and dignity of her manners. Even amid the splendour of foreign courts, she was considered a distinguished ornament. Yet Mrs. Adams had not been brought up in petted indolence, or shut from the sun and air, for fear of injury to her beauty, or her gracefulness. She was a capable, active, and *observing woman* ; and while she was the admiration of European courts, she knew how to make butter and cheese as well as any woman in Weymouth, which was her native place. In the latter part of her life, she was one day passing the home of her childhood, in company with an intimate friend ; she paused, and looked at a long lane near the house, saying in an

animated tone, "Oh, how many hours and hours I have driven a hoop up and down that lane!" As might be expected, Mrs. Adams enjoyed a hale and happy old age. Among the other good effects of her example, she has left a practical lesson to her country-women, that refined elegance is perfectly compatible with driving a hoop in the open air.

I cannot pass over the subject of amusements, without saying something in relation to children's balls and parties. I do not believe human ingenuity ever invented any thing worse for the health, heart, or happiness—any thing at once so poisonous to body and soul. I do not, of course, refer to a social intercourse between the children of different families—that should be encouraged. I mean regular parties, in imitation of high-life—where children eat confectionary, stay late, dress in finery, talk nonsense, and affect what they do not feel—just as their elders in the fashionable world do. It is a heart-sickening sight to see innocent creatures thus early trained to vanity and affectation. In mercy to your children, trust not their purity and peace in such a sickly and corrupting atmosphere. "Who was your beau last night?" said a girl of eight years old to another of ten. "I danced twice with George Wells," was the reply. "Did you wear your pink sash, or your blue one?" I could have wept in very pity for the guileless young creatures, into whose cup of life poison had been so early poured! I speak the more earnestly on this subject, because it has become so general a habit with all classes of people to indulge children in balls and parties.

As for dancing, in itself, I see no objection to it. It is a healthy, innocent, and graceful recreation. The vanity and dissipation of which it has usually been

the accompaniment, have brought it into disrepute with the conscientious. But if dancing be made to serve the purpose, which all accomplishments should serve,—that of ministering to the pleasure of father, mother, brothers, sisters and friends,—it is certainly innocent and becoming. I do not mean to imply that it is wrong to dance any where else but at home.—I simply mean that girls should not learn an accomplishment for the *purpose* of display among strangers. Let them learn any thing which your income allows (without a diminution of comfort or benevolence)—but teach them to acquire it as a means of future usefulness, as a pleasant resource, or for the sake of making home agreeable—not with the hope of exciting admiration abroad*.

It is very important, and very difficult, to furnish young children with sufficient employment. What we call a natural love of mischief, is in fact nothing but activity. Children are restless for employment; they must have something to do; and if they are not furnished with what is useful or innocent, they will do mischief. No one who has not lived with a family of children can conceive how very difficult it is to keep a child of five or six years old employed. It is a good plan to teach little girls to knit, weave bobbin, watchguards, chains, &c. Making patchwork is likewise a quiet amusement; and if a child be taught to fit it herself, it may be made really useful. If the corners are not fitted exactly, or the sewing done neatly, it should be taken to pieces and fitted again; for it is by inattention to these little things that habits of carelessness are formed. On no occasion whatever should a child be excused from finishing what she has begun.

* Bishop Horne, in his *Life of John the Baptist*, has some beautiful sentiments on this point.—*Ed.*

The custom of having half a dozen things on hand at once, should not be tolerated. Every thing should be finished, and well finished. It ought to be considered a disgrace to give up any thing, after it is once undertaken. Habits of perseverance are of incalculable importance; and a parent should earnestly improve the most trifling opportunities of encouraging them. Even in so small a thing as untying a knot, a boy should be taught to think it unmanly to be either impatient or discouraged.

Always encourage a child in fitting her own work, and arranging her own playthings. Few things are more valuable, in this changing world, than the power of taking care of ourselves. It is a useful thing for children to make a little shirt exactly after the model of a large one, fitting all the parts themselves, after you have furnished them with a model of each part in paper. Knitting may be learned still earlier than sewing. I am sorry to see this old-fashioned accomplishment so universally discarded. It is a great resource to the aged; and women, in all situations of life, have so many lonely hours, that they cannot provide themselves with too many resources in youth. For this reason I would indulge girls in learning any thing that did not interfere with their duties, provided I could easily afford it; such as all kinds of ornamental work, boxes, baskets, purses, &c. Every new acquirement, however trifling, is an additional resource against poverty and depression of spirits.

The disposition to help others should be cherished as much as possible. Even very little children are happy when they think they are useful. "I can do *some* good, cannot I, mother?" is one of the first questions asked. To encourage this spirit, indulge children in assisting you, even when their exertions are full as much trouble as

profit. Let them go out with their little basket, to weed the garden, to gather pease for dinner, to feed the chickens, &c. It is true they will at first need constant watching, to prevent them from pulling up flowers as well as weeds ; but then it employs them innocently, and makes them happy ; and if dealt gently with, they soon learn to avoid mistakes. In the house, various things may be found to employ children. As far as possible keep children always employed—either sewing, or knitting, or reading, or playing, or studying, or walking. Do not let them form habits of listlessness and lounging. If they endeavour to assist you, and do mischief, while they are really trying to do their best, do not scold them ; merely explain to them how they should have gone to work, and give them a lesson of carefulness in future.

As girls grow older, they should be taught to take the entire care of their own clothes, and of all the light and easy work necessary in their own apartments.

I have said less about boys, but the same general rules apply to both sexes. Boys should be allowed to assist others, when they possibly can, and should be encouraged in all sorts of ingenious experiments not absolutely mischievous. In general it is a good rule to learn whatever we can, without interfering with our duties. My grand-mother used to say, “ Lay by all scraps and fragments, and they will be sure to come into use in seven years.” I would make the same remark with regard to scraps and fragments of knowledge. It is impossible for us to foresee in youth, what will be the circumstances of our after-life ; the kind of information, which at one period seems likely to be of very little use to us, may become very important. If I happened to be thrown into the society of those who excelled in any particular branch, I would gain all the

information I could, without being obtrusive. No matter whether it be as to poetry or puddings, making shoes or learning music,—riding a horse, or rearing a grape-vine ; it is well to learn whatever comes in one's way, provided it does not interfere with the regular discharge of duty. It was a maxim with the great Sir William Jones, “never to lose an opportunity of learning any thing.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE SABBATH.—RELIGION.

It is a great misfortune for people to imbibe, in the days of childhood, a dislike of the Sabbath, or a want of reverence for its sacred character. Some parents, from a conscientious wish to have the Sabbath kept holy, restrain children in the most natural and innocent expressions of gaiety ; if they laugh, or jump, or touch their playthings, they are told that it is wicked to do so, because it is Sunday. The result of this excessive strictness is that the day becomes hateful to them. They learn to consider it a period of gloom and privation ; and the Bible and the church become distasteful, because they are associated with those feelings.

A little girl of my acquaintance, in the innocence of her heart, once made an exclamation, which showed what she really thought of Sunday. She had long been very anxious to go to the theatre ; and when she was about six or seven years old, her wish was very injudiciously gratified. The afterpiece happened to be *Der Freyschütz*, a horrible German play, in which wizards, devils, and flames

are the principal agents. The child's terror increased until her loud sobs made it necessary to carry her home. "What is the matter with my darling?" asked her grandmother; "does she not like to go to the theatre?" "Oh, grandmother!" exclaimed the sobbing child, "it is a great deal worse than going to meeting!"

My motive in mentioning this anecdote will not, of course, be misunderstood. Nothing is further from my intention than to throw ridicule on any place of worship. It is merely introduced to show that Sunday was so unpleasantly associated in this child's mind, as to make her involuntarily compare it with any thing disagreeable or painful; being restrained at home during every moment of the day, made the necessary restraint at church irksome to her; whereas, with proper management, it might have been in every way pleasing.

Some parents, on the other hand, go to the opposite extreme; and from the fear of making the Sabbath gloomy, they make no distinction between that and other days. This is the more dangerous extreme of the two. A reverence for the Sabbath, even if it be a mere matter of habit, and felt to be a restraint, is very much better than no feeling at all upon the subject. But it appears to me that a medium between the two extremes is both easy and expedient. Children under five or six years old cannot sit still and read all day; and this should not be required of them. They may be made to look on a book, but they cannot be made to feel interested in it, hour after hour. They are by nature so restless, so active, and so gay, that they cannot keep their thoughts long intent upon any one subject, and to require it of them, is to drive them into disobedience. The mind of a child is very capable of apprehending Gospel truths, but it cannot dwell upon

them, in the way of meditation, or in any continued process of reasoning, and if a child is compelled to keep his eyes on a book, when his mind is wandering elsewhere, it will early give him the impression that mere outward observances constitute religion. It is so much easier to perform external ceremonies, than it is to drive away evil feelings from our hearts, that mankind in all ages have been prone to trust in them. They who think they are religious, merely because they attend church regularly, and read a chapter in the Bible periodically, labour precisely under the same mistake as the Mohammedan, who expects to save his soul, by travelling barefoot to Mecca ; or the East Indian fakir, who hangs with his head downward, several hours each day, in order to ensure God's favour, and prove his sanctity to men. There is no real religion that does not come from the heart ; outward observances are worth nothing, unless they spring from inward feeling. In all ages and countries, we find men willing to endure every species of privation and suffering, nay, even death itself, for the sake of going to heaven ; but very few are willing that the Lord should purify their hearts from selfish feelings. Like the leper of old, they are willing to do some *great* thing, but they will not obey the simple injunction to "wash and be clean."

This tendency to trust in what is outward is so strong in human nature, that great care should be taken not to strengthen it by education. Children should always be taught to judge whether their actions are right, by the *motives* which induced the actions. Religion should be made as pleasant as possible to their feelings ; and particular rules and prohibitions should be avoided as much as possible.

Quiet is the first idea which a young child can receive

of the Sabbath ; therefore I would take no notice of his playing with his kitten, or his blocks, so long as he kept still. If he grew noisy, I should then say to him, " You must not make a noise to-day, for it is Sunday, and I wish to be quiet, and read good books. If you run about, it disturbs me."

I make these remarks with regard to very young children. As soon as they are old enough to read and take an interest in religious instruction, I would have playthings put away ; but I would not compel them to refrain from play, before I gave them something else to interest their minds. I would make a *difference* in their playthings. The noisy rattle, and the cart which have amused them during the week, should give place to picture-books, the kitten, little blocks, or any *quiet* amusement.

If the heads of a family keep the Sabbath with sobriety and stillness, the spirit of the day enters into the hearts of the children. I have seen children of three and four years old, who were habitually more quiet on Sunday than on any other day, merely from the soothing influence of example.

A child should be accustomed to attend public worship as early as possible ; and the walk to and from church should be made pleasant, by calling his attention to agreeable objects. When his little heart is delighted with the lamb, or the dove, or the dog, or the flower, you have pointed out to him, take that opportunity to tell him God made all these things, and that he has provided every thing for their comfort, because he is very kind. We are too apt to forget God, except in times of affliction, and to remind children of him only during some awful manifestation of his power ; such as thunder, lightning, and whirlwind. It certainly is proper to direct the infant thoughts to him

at such seasons ; but not at such seasons only. A tempest produces a natural feeling of awe, which should never be disturbed by jesting and laughter ; emotions of dependence and reverence are salutary to mortals. But we should speak of God often in connexion with every thing calm and happy. We should lead the mind to dwell upon his infinite *goodness* ; that he may indeed be regarded as a Heavenly *Father*.

An early habit of prayer is a blessed thing. I would teach it to a child as soon as he could lisp the words. At first, some simple form must be used, like, "Pray God bless me, and keep me, and all my friends and relations, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen ;" but as children grow older, it is well for them to express themselves just as they feel. A little daughter of one of my friends, when undressed to go to bed, knelt down of her own accord, and said, "Our Father, which art in heaven, forgive me for striking my little brother to-day, and help me not to strike him again ; for oh, if he should die, how sorry I should be that I struck him !" Another, in her evening prayer, thanked God for a little sugar dog, that had been given her in the course of the day. Let it not be thought for a moment that there is any irreverence in such prayers as these, coming from little innocent hearts. It has a blessed influence to look to God as the source of all our enjoyments ; and as the enjoyments of a child must necessarily be childish, it is sincere and proper for them to express gratitude in this way.

While I endeavoured to make Sunday a very cheerful day, I would as far as possible give a religious character to all its conversation and employments. Very young children will become strongly interested in the Bible, if it is read to them, or they are suffered to talk about it.

They will want to hear, for the hundredth time, about the little boy who said to his father, "My head! My head!" They will tell over to each other, with a great deal of delight, how he died, and was laid on his little bed, and how the prophet lay down with him, and restored him to life; and how the little boy sneezed seven times.

The story of Joseph, of Samuel, of David, of the meeting of Isaac and Rebecca at the Well, are very attractive to children. It is the first duty of a mother to make the Bible precious and delightful to her family. In order to do this, she must choose such parts as are best suited to their capacities; talk to them about it in a pleasant and familiar style; and try to get their little minds interested in what they read. If made to spell out a chapter in a cold, formal manner, and then told to go and sit down and be still, they will take no interest in the Bible; nor would they, by such means, take an interest in any thing.

At no period of life should people hear the Bible spoken lightly of, or any passage quoted in jest; thoughtlessness in this respect does great mischief to ourselves and others. There cannot be a worse practice than that of making a child commit to memory a chapter of the Scriptures as a punishment for any offence. At some schools, the Bible (being the heaviest book to be found) is held at arm's length till the little culprit gets so weary, that he would gladly throw the volume across the room. This is very injudicious. In no way whatever should the Bible be associated with any thing disagreeable.

A little hymn, to be learned every Sunday, is a pleasant and profitable lesson; and if it is simple enough to be understood, the child will amuse himself by repeating it through the week. Some of the very strongest impressions of childhood are made by the hymns learned at an early

age : therefore, parents should be careful what are learned. They should first read them themselves, and *think* carefully what impressions of God, religion, and death, they are likely to convey.

As children grow older, you may add to their interest in the Scriptures, by accounts of Palestine, and of the customs of the Jews. Maps, on which the travels of our Saviour and the Apostles may be traced, are excellent for Sunday lessons. By such means as these you may give an interest to religious instruction, and prevent it from becoming irksome. Perhaps some parents will be ready to say, that their own education has not fitted them for thus assisting their children ; but whoever has common sense may easily acquire, from books and maps, sufficient information to assist children in understanding the Scriptures. As for the expense, it is better to give your child right feelings and enlightened ideas, than to give him money. You may leave him wealth, but he cannot buy happiness with it, neither can he buy a good heart, or a strong mind ; but if his feelings are correct, and his understanding cultivated, he will assuredly be happy, and will be very likely to acquire a competency of the good things of this world.

In order to relieve the tediousness of too much reading and studying, it is a good plan for parents to walk with children on Sunday afternoon, for the purpose of drawing their attention to the works of God, and explaining how his goodness extends over all things. The structure of a bird's nest may be made to convey religious instruction, and inspire religious feeling, as well as a hymn. For this reason, books which treat of the wonderful mechanism of the eye and the ear, the provisions for the comfort of animals, and the preservation of plants—in a word, all

that leads the mind to dwell upon the goodness and power of God,—are appropriate books for Sunday, and may be read, or studied, to great advantage, when children are old enough to understand them.

But after all, religion is not so much taught by *lessons*, as it is by our examples, and habits of speaking, acting, and thinking. It should not be a garment reserved only for Sunday wear; we should always be in the habit of referring every thing to our Father in heaven. If a child is reminded of God at a moment of peculiar happiness, and is then told to be grateful to Him for all his enjoyments, it will do him more good than any words he can learn. To see the cherry-stone he has planted becoming a tree, and to be told that God made it grow, will make a more lively impression on his mind, than could be produced by any lesson from a book. The people called Quakers, or Friends, say every day should be Sunday; and certainly no day should pass without our using some of the opportunities, which are always occurring, of leading the heart to God. When we are enumerating the employments proper for Sunday, we must not omit to mention the reciting of our Church Catechism. I would have a very small portion of this catechism, learned every day in the week, and the part thus learned merely repeated and commented upon shortly on Sunday, so as to avoid the pain of getting it by heart on that day, which, it must be remembered, is a day of rest.

Small portions of the Bible itself are good to be learned; and something may be found there to interest all ages. It is important that Bible lessons should be accompanied with familiar and serious conversation with parents; it interests a child's feelings, and enlightens his understanding. Perhaps some will think I have pointed out

very arduous duties for the Sabbath, and that if so much is done for children, parents will have no time left for their own reading and reflection. But there can be no doubt that interesting lessons and conversations with children are both pleasant and useful to parents; you cannot dispose of a part of the day more satisfactorily to your heart or your conscience. It is by no means necessary to devote the whole day expressly to their instruction. Let your own pursuits be such as imply a respect for the sanctity of the Sabbath, and *put them in the way* of employing themselves about what is good, as well as pleasant.

Young people should always be taught to respect the employments and convenience of others; they should learn to wait patiently for their elders to join in their studies or amusements. If you treat them with perfect gentleness, and show a willingness to attend to them when it is in your power, they will soon acquire the habit of waiting cheerfully. But never explain any thing to a child because he is impatient and teases you, when it is really very inconvenient to you, and of no immediate consequence to him. Let your constant practice in all things show him, that you are less inclined to attend to him when he teases you, than when he waits patiently; but, at the same time, never make him wait when it is not necessary. Gentleness and firmness united, work to form a child's character with an effect quite irresistible.

The religious knowledge conveyed in early childhood should be extremely simple. It should be addressed to the heart rather than to the understanding. The affections should be filled with love and gratitude to God. It is enough to be told that God is their Father in heaven; that every thing in the world is formed by his wisdom,

and preserved by his love ; that he knows every thought of the hearts of all his children ; that he loves them when they try to do what is right ; and that good children, when they die, go to heaven, where God and the angels are. That our blessed Saviour died for their souls, and that the Holy Spirit will make them holy and good, and fit for heaven, if they will pray for his grace, and be good children.

No opportunity should be lost of impressing upon their minds that God *loves* the creatures he has made. Even for the most common enjoyments of life they should be taught to be thankful to Him. When guilty of a falsehood, or any other wrong action, they should be solemnly reminded that though nobody in the world may know it, God knows it. This simple truth will make a serious impression, even when they are quite young ; and as they grow older, it may be more deeply impressed, by adding that every time we indulge any evil feeling, we remove ourselves further from God and good angels, and render ourselves less fit for heaven. It may seem like a nice metaphysical distinction, but I do think it very important that children should early, and constantly, receive the idea that the wicked *remove themselves* from God,—that God never *withdraws from them*. Divine influence is always shedding its holy beams upon the human soul, to purify and bless. It is our own fault, if our souls are in such a state that we cannot receive it.

In the whole course of education, we should never forget that we are rearing beings for another world as well as for this ; they should be taught to consider this life as a preparation for a better. Human policy is apt to look no further than the honours and emoluments of this world ; but our present life is, at the longest, but an

exceedingly small part of our existence ; and how unwise it is to prepare for time, and neglect eternity. Besides, the best way of fitting ourselves for this world is to prepare for another. Human prudence is not willing to perform every duty in earnestness and humility, and trust the rest to Providence. Yet, after all, God will do much better for us than we can do for ourselves. All our deep-laid schemes cannot make us so happy as we should be if we were simply good. I do not mean that the active employments of life should be neglected ; for I consider them as duties, which may and ought to be performed in the true spirit of religion : I mean that we should industriously cultivate and exert our abilities, as a means of usefulness, without feeling anxious about wealth or reputation. It is the doing things from a wrong motive, which produces so much disorder and unhappiness in the world.

There is nothing, perhaps, in which Christians act so inconsistently as in surrounding death with associations of grief and terror, unmixed with those of hope and joy ; whenever this subject is necessarily brought under the notice of a child, we should treat it as cheerfully as possible. We all must die ; and if we *really* believe that we shall live hereafter, under the care of the same all-merciful God, who has protected us here, why should we dread to die ? Children should always hear death spoken of as a blessed change ; and though we mourn when our friends die, we should not sorrow as those who have no hope. When death occurs in the family, use the opportunity to make a child familiar with it. Tell him the brother, or sister, or parent he loved, is gone to God ; and that the good are far happier with the holy angels, than they could have been on earth ; and that if we are

good, we shall in a little while go to them in heaven. Whenever he afterwards alludes to them, say they are as much alive as they were on this earth; and far happier. Do not speak of it as a thing to be regretted that they have gone early to heaven; but rather speak of the privilege reserved for us, that we shall one day go to them. This is the view which the Christian religion gives us; and it thereby supplies the only rational and true antidote to the terrors of mind and gloomy apprehensions, necessarily excited in our minds upon our first acquaintance with death. It is from revelation alone that we learn the fact of the immortality of our souls, and that death is but a temporary separation of them from their present state of union with our bodies; and it is this divine assurance which forms the only ground-work of our consolation in the fear of death.

To exemplify these remarks, I will add an anecdote, that came under the observation of one of my friends. A little girl saw a beloved aunt die. The child was very young,—she had no ideas at all about death,—it was her first lesson on the subject. She was much affected, and wept bitterly. Her mother led her to the bed, kissed the cheek of the corpse, and observed how smiling and happy the countenance looked. “We must not weep for dear aunt Betsy,” said she; “she is living now with the angels; and though she cannot come to see us, she loves us, and will rejoice when we are good. If we are good, like her, we shall go to heaven, where she is; and to go to heaven, is like going to a happy *home*.”

This conversation soothed the child's mind; she touched the cold hand, kissed the cold cheek, and felt sure that her aunt was still alive and loved her.

A year or two afterwards, this child was very ill, and

they told her the physician said she would die. She looked up smiling in her mother's face, and said, with joyful simplicity, "I shall see dear aunt Betsy before you do, mother."

A friend, who had resided some time in Brazil, told an anecdote, which was extremely pleasing to me, on account of the distinct and animating faith it implied. When walking on the beach, he overtook a Negro woman, carrying a large tray upon her head. Thinking she had fruit or flowers to sell, he called to her to stop. On being asked what she had in her tray, she lowered the burden upon the sand, and gently uncovered it. It was a dead Negro babe, covered with a neat white robe, with a garland around its head, and a bunch of flowers in the little hands, that lay clasped upon its bosom. "Is this your child?" asked my friend. "It *was* mine a few days ago," she said; "but it is the Madonna's now. I am carrying it to the church to be buried. *It is a little angel now.*" "How beautifully you have laid it out!" said the traveller. "Ah," replied the Negro, "that is nothing compared to the beautiful bright wings with which it is flying through heaven!"

With regard to supernatural appearances of ghosts or spirits, they should never be spoken of as objects of terror, but neither should they be treated as ridiculous. God has not seen fit to reveal to us the manner of the separate existence of our souls after death; and we cannot, therefore, be certain that it is impossible for departed spirits to come under the cognizance of our bodily senses; we know that such appearances do not occur in the present age of the world, or in the ordinary course of God's government of it (or of nature, as we call it.) Though most of the stories told of such appearances, in our own times, are false

pretences ; and none may have been so authenticated, as to justify our belief in them ; yet we read in the Bible of angels holding intercourse with men, and of the dead rising from their graves, and appearing unto many ; so that we cannot deny the possibility of such things. And, indeed, independently of these revelations, it would be a gross presumption in us to deny the possibility of any thing, merely on the ground of our own ignorance concerning it.

Some say, keep children in utter ignorance of such subjects ; but that is not possible. They will find them mentioned in Scripture, and in nine-tenths of the books not expressly written for childhood. Our utmost care cannot keep such ideas from entering their minds ; and my own opinion is, that it is not desirable we should do so. I believe that children may be taught to think of supernatural appearances, not only without terror, but with actual pleasure. It is a solemn and mysterious subject, and should not be introduced needlessly ; but if children ask questions of their own accord, I should answer them according to what I believe to be the truth. I should tell them, I believe the dead to be angels, that is to say, living, and thinking beings ; that they are happy in heaven in proportion as they had been virtuous on earth : beings like ourselves, only not clothed with mortal bodies, yet capable of holding intercourse with each other, and with us also, if God permitted it ; and that in ancient times angels used to visit men, but that in later times God has not permitted such direct intercourse, though many good and wise men are of opinion that angels, full of love, still watch over the good, and rejoice when they put away a wicked thought, or conquer a wicked feeling ; which may very well be supposed, for that it would not be more reasonable if a

blind man were to deny the existence of the sun, merely because he cannot see it, than it would be for us to deny the existence of angels. For the same reason, I would tell them that the wicked, by disobeying and forgetting God, go away from the influence of his holy angels, but that God always protects his faithful servants, and we need not be afraid of any thing that is evil, except the evil inclinations of our own hearts ; that if we try to be good, God will guard us, and teach us what we ought to do ; and that evil spirits can have no power to hurt us, or to make us afraid, except the power which we give them by forgetting and disobeying God.

I believe that children would have no sort of fear on subjects which they heard thus familiarly and plainly dealt with. In one or two instances, the experiment has been tried with perfect success. The children to whom I allude never have an apprehension or expectation of *seeing* spirits ; but they think Abraham and Jacob, who used to see them, must have been very happy. They are familiar with the idea that if they indulge in evil, they put themselves under the influence of evil spirits ; but they have not the slightest fear of *seeing* them. They know that they have spiritual eyes, with which they see in their dreams, and will see in heaven ; and that they have bodily eyes, with which they see the material things of this world ; but they know very well that spiritual forms cannot be seen by the natural organs of sight.

If my advice on this mysterious subject seems to you absurd, or impracticable, reject it, in the same freedom with which I have given it. But let me ask you one question—Did you ever know fear upon these subjects overcome by ridicule, or by arguments to prove there were no such things as supernatural appearances ? I once knew a

strong-minded man, who prided himself upon believing nothing which he could not see, touch, and understand. (How he believed in the existence of his own soul, I do not know.) His children, from some cause or other, had their minds excited on the subject of visions. The father told them it was all nonsense—that there was not a word of truth in any thing of the sort. “But Jesus Christ appeared to his disciples, after he was dead,” said one of the boys. “Oh, that was a miracle,” replied the father: “sit down, and I will tell you a beautiful ghost-story.” Then he told a long story of a man, who several times saw his deceased friend all dressed in white, seated in his arm-chair, wearing exactly the same wig he had always worn in his life-time. The story was wrought up with a good deal of skill. The gloom of twilight, the melancholy smile of the phantom, the terror of the spectator, were all eloquently described. The anxious curiosity of the children was wrought to the highest pitch. At last, the end of the story came.—“A servant entered with a light, and the old man in the arm-chair proved to be—a great white dog!”

But what was the effect on the children? Did such a story calm or satisfy their minds? No. It terrified them greatly. For months after, they were afraid to go into the dark, lest they should see—a great white dog.

While I represented the intercourse with angels as a *privilege* that belonged to purity and innocence, I would as much as possible keep from the knowledge of children all those frightful stories to which remorse and disease have given birth. Should any such come in their way, I would represent them as, what they doubtless are, the effects of a guilty conscience, or disordered nerves, both

of which produce a species of insanity; and at the same time I would talk of the love and protection of their heavenly Father, reminding them that every time they resisted what was wrong, they put themselves more and more under the blessed influence of God and his holy angels.

CHAPTER VII.

BOOKS.

THE books chosen for young people should as far as possible combine amusement with instruction; but it is very important that amusement should not become a necessary inducement to read. I think a real love of reading is the greatest blessing education can bestow, particularly upon a woman. It cheers so many hours of illness and seclusion; it gives the mind something to interest itself about, instead of the concerns of one's neighbours, and the changes of fashion; it enlarges the heart, by giving extensive views of the world; it every day increases the points of sympathy with an intelligent husband; and it gives a mother materials for furnishing the minds of her children. I believe, however, that a real love of reading is not common among women.

I know that the new novels are very generally read; but this springs from the same love of pleasing excitement, which leads people to the theatre; it does not proceed from a thirst for information. For this reason, it has the bad effect of encouraging an early love for works of fiction; particularly such as contain romantic incidents. To be sure, works of this kind have of late years assumed so elevated a character, that there is very

much less danger from them than formerly. We now have many true pictures of life in all its forms, instead of the sentimental, love-sick effusions, which turned the heads of girls fifty years ago. But even the best of novels should form the *recreation* rather than the *employment* of the mind; they should only be read now and then. They are a sort of literary confectionary; and, though they may be very perfect and beautiful, yet if eaten of too plentifully, they do tend to destroy our appetite for more solid and nourishing food. The same remarks apply, in a less degree, to children's forming the habit of reading nothing but *stories*, which are, in fact, *little novels*. To prevent an exclusive and injurious taste for fiction, it is well to encourage in them a love of History, Voyages, Travels, Biography, &c. This may be done by our hearing them read such books, or reading with them, frequently talking about them, and seeming pleased if they remember sufficiently well to give a good account of what they have read.

Sir William Jones, who had perhaps as great a passion for knowledge as any other mortal, and who became in consequence, extensively useful and celebrated, says, that when he asked questions about any thing, his mother used to say to him, "Read your book, and you will know." Being an intelligent and judicious woman, she took pains to procure such volumes as would satisfy his inquiries; and in this way his love of books became an intense passion; he resorted to them as the thirsty do to a fountain. This anecdote furnishes a valuable hint. I am aware that all cannot afford to buy books freely; but I believe there are very few in this land of abundance, who do not spend, in the superfluities of dress and the table, more than enough to purchase a valuable library. Besides, ample means of information are now furnished

by public libraries, in most parts of England, and here it certainly is easy to follow the example of Sir William Jones's mother. For instance, a cold day in winter would naturally lead a child to say, "I wonder how people can live near the Poles; where my Geography says they have six months of night and winter." Here is a good opportunity for a parent to reply, "I will get a book about Polar regions, and you shall read to me after you have learned your lessons; if I am busy, and cannot hear you, you must read by yourself, and tell me all about it."

It is by seizing such incidents as these, that a real love of knowledge may be instilled. The habit of having the different members of a family take turns to read aloud, while the others are at work, is extremely beneficial. It is likewise an excellent plan for young people to give a familiar account, in writing, of what they have read, and to make their own remarks upon the subject freely; but these juvenile productions should never be shown out of the family, or praised in an exaggerated manner, likely to excite vanity; and if one child is more gifted than another, care should be taken to bestow the greatest share of encouragement on the one that needs it most.

I could wish the habit of reading the purest and best authors aloud were more frequent in our schools. I know not how it is, girls learn an abundance of things, but they do not acquire a *love* of reading. I know very few young ladies, among those esteemed thoroughly educated, to whom a book is really a more agreeable resource than visiting, dress, and frivolous conversation. Their *understanding* may have been well drilled in certain sciences; but knowledge has no place in their *affections*. The result is, that what they have learned at school is gradually forgotten, instead of being brought into constant use in after-life. Like soldiers

on parade-day, they go through a certain routine, and then throw by their accoutrements as things useless for any thing but *parade*. The fact is, we should always begin with the affections. What we love to do, we accomplish through all manner of obstacles; but what we do not love to do is up-hill work, and will not be performed if it can be avoided. If a fondness for books be once imbibed, the understanding will soon be enlightened on all interesting subjects; and a person who reads,—as he drinks water,—when he is thirsty, is the least likely of all men to be pedantic. Miss Edgeworth has very beautifully remarked, “We are disgusted when we see a woman’s mind overwhelmed with a *torrent* of learning. That the tide of literature has passed over it, should be betrayed only by its *general fertility*.” And this will be the result, if books are loved as a resource, and a means of usefulness, not as affording opportunity for display.

I have said that reading works of fiction too much, tends to destroy a relish for any thing more solid, and less exciting; but it is very injudicious to prohibit them entirely, or to talk against them with much severity. This always produces a fidgetty desire to read them; and unless the principles are very strong, they will be read by stealth. The best way is to allow the occasional perusal of such works of fiction as are pure in spirit and in language; and when a taste is once formed for the best kind, silly ones will have no charm. In this instance, as in others of more importance, evil is prevented from entering, by finding the mind occupied with good.

Many readers, and writers too, think any book is proper for young people, which has a good moral at the end; but the fact is, some books, with a long excellent moral, have the worst possible effect on a young mind. The morality

should be *in* the book, not tacked on to the *end* of it. Vices the juvenile readers never heard of, are introduced, dressed up in alluring characters, which excite their admiration, their love, their deepest pity ; and then they are told that these heroes and heroines were very naughty, and that in the end they were certain to die despised and neglected. But what is the result ? The generous bosom of youth pities the sinners, and thinks the world was a cruel world to despise and neglect them.

I doubt whether books which represent vice, in any way, are suitable to be put into the hands of those whose principles are not formed. It is better to paint virtue to be imitated, than vice to be shunned. Familiarity with evil is a disadvantage, even when pointed out as an object of disgust. It is true that evil must come in the way of the young ; they will find it in books, and they will find plenty of it in the world. It would be useless to attempt always to keep such volumes out of the way ; but I would, as far as possible, avoid them when a child is young, and his mind is comparatively empty. After his principles and taste are formed, he will view such descriptions as he ought. For the same reason I do not approve of stories about naughty children ; they suggest a thousand little tricks and deceptions, which would not otherwise be thought of.

Children, especially girls, should not read any thing without a mother's knowledge and sanction ; this is particularly necessary between the ages of twelve and sixteen, when the feelings are all fervent and enthusiastic, and the understanding is not strengthened by experience and observation. At this period, the mind and heart are very active, and parents should take peculiar care to furnish them with plenty of innocent employment.

I had almost forgotten to mention the prejudice which some people have against all manner of fairy-stories and fables, simply upon the ground that they are not strictly true. The objection does not seem to me a forcible one ; because I do not believe children ever think they are true. During my own childhood, I am very sure I regarded them as just what they were,—as efforts of the imagination—dreams that had a meaning to them. I do object to reading many of these things ; for they are the novels of infancy, and have a similar effect, though in a less degree. All frightful and monstrous fairy stories are, indeed, abominable ; but I do not believe that *Cinderella*, or the *Glass Slipper*, ever injured any child. With regard to fables, children do not believe that dogs, foxes, and birds, talk to each other ; nor do they think that the writer *intended* they should believe it ; therefore it cannot be injurious to their love of truth. No child, who reads those pretty little verses beginning with,

“Come up into my chamber,” said the spider to the fly,—

“’Tis the prettiest little chamber that ever you did spy !”

believes that the spider actually talked to the fly. Children understand the moral it is intended to convey perfectly well ; they know that it means we should not allow the flattery or solicitations of others to tempt us to what is improper and dangerous. Fables and fairy-stories, which contain a clear and simple moral, have, I think, a good tendency ; but care should be taken to ascertain whether the little readers understand the moral, and to explain it clearly to them, if they do not.

Imagination was bestowed upon us by the Great Giver of all things, and unquestionably was intended to be employed and cultivated in a due proportion to the other powers of the mind. An exclusive or excessive indulgence

of it is unquestionably most injurious ; but that is no argument against a moderate cultivation of it ; the *excess* of *all* good things is mischievous.

A strong reason why we should indulge children in reading some of the best fairy-stories and fables, and young people in reading some of the best works of fiction, is, that we cannot possibly help their getting hold of some books of this description ; and it is never wise to forbid what we cannot prevent : besides, how much better it is that their choice should be guided by a parent, than left to chance.

Of late years, the circulating libraries have been overrun with what are called works of imagination, many of them strongly exciting to the passions, without any control of religious or moral discipline. The greater the genius displayed in such works, the more dangerous are their effects. The desire of fierce excitement in reading is a sort of intellectual intemperance ; and, like bodily intoxication, it produces weakness and delirium. The Pelham novels, the works of Byron, Maturin, Lewis, and Godwin, though very different from each other, are all liable to this objection. They have a most unhealthy influence upon the soul. But books that frighten and painfully excite the youthful mind, bad as they are, are not so bad as the honied poison of Thomas Moore. He does not show his cloven foot. He does not try to make us in love with sin by vindicating all its deformity ; he covers it with a silver veil, and makes it float so gracefully before the young and innocent, that it seems to them a creature of light. Such books do infinitely more mischief, than those openly bad in principles and in language ; for danger that is concealed is not easily avoided.

The poems of L. E. L. cannot be charged with immodesty ; but they are unreal, sentimental, and exciting. I would not put them into the hands of a young girl, particularly if she were imaginative or susceptible.

Historical works of fiction may be read in connexion with history to great advantage. There is an edition of Shakspeare, called *The Family Shakspeare*, in which impure sentences are entirely omitted ; the historical plays in this edition would give a strong additional interest to the history of the periods they illustrate. Sir Walter Scott has furnished a novel for almost all the interesting reigns in English History. These works are not professedly religious or moral. They are pictures of life as it is—giving a distinct idea of the manners, costume, and superstitions, of various ages. Their influence is never in opposition to good ; and to a thinking mind they afford abundant food for reflection, as well as an inexhaustible fund of amusement.

Amid the multiplicity of modern books, the old standard works are too much neglected. Young people had better read *Plutarch's Lives*, and *Anarcharsis' Travels in Greece*, than fifty of the best miscellaneous productions of the day. To read every new thing, fosters a love of novelty, and a craving for excitement ; and it fritters away time and intellect to little purpose. Such books as I have recommended strengthen the mind, and fill it with something solid. They are particularly valuable on account of the classical information they contain. All women should have some classical knowledge. I do not mean that they should study Latin and Greek. I merely mean that they should have some general information of the government, customs, religion, &c., of the ancients ; and the reason why

I think it so desirable is, that they cannot understand the allusions in good English books without some such knowledge. Milton, for instance, is full of classical allusions of this kind, as well as to ancient customs and superstitions.

It is of very great importance that children should perfectly understand what they read. They should be encouraged to give clear and distinct accounts of what they have read ; and when you are doubtful whether they know the meaning of a word, be sure to ask them. If you yourself do not know, do not hesitate to say so, and refer them to the dictionary. Some people think it diminishes respect, to acknowledge ignorance ; but the fear is unfounded. Good sense and good judgment command respect, whether they are accompanied by great extent of information, or not. No child ever respected a judicious parent less for saying, "When I was young, I had not such opportunities for learning as you have ; but I know how to value knowledge ; and that makes me so anxious you should learn."

The habit, which I recommended in the third chapter, of directing the attention of very little children to surrounding objects, lays an excellent foundation for obtaining clear and accurate ideas of what is read. The same habit of observation, that leads them to remark whether a thing is round or square, likewise leads them to attend to the sense of what they find in books.

I believe the multitude of little books generally put into the hands of children are an injury, rather than a benefit. Juvenile ideas are rapid and transient ; and a repetition of the same thoughts makes them familiar and distinct. Ideas produce such a transient impression upon the mind of an infant, that he is never weary of hearing the same old story over and over again ; it is always new to him.

The same remark is true, in different degrees, of all the various stages of childhood. It is better to read one book and understand it perfectly, than to read a dozen and understand them imperfectly. It is astonishing how much pleasure and information are lost by careless readers.

A teacher once said to me, "I heard a young lady read *The Abbot*, by Sir Walter Scott. When she had finished, I tried to persuade her to tell me what she thought of it, and what she remembered. 'Why, after all,' she replied, 'Scott does not tell whether Queen Mary had sandy hair, or dark hair: I was in hopes he would, for I always wanted to know.' This girl was naturally bright and intelligent; but she had not been accustomed to attend to any thing, except what related to dress and personal appearance. The descriptions of Scottish scenery, the workings of religious prejudice, the intrigues of political faction, the faithful pictures of life and manners, were all lost upon her. She did not *observe* them, because she had never formed the habit of observing. She read through these two volumes, so full of historical interest, without feeling interested in any thing but the colour of Queen Mary's hair." Had she never read more than half a dozen books in her life, and been called upon to give a faithful account of them, it would have been impossible for her to be so entirely unobserving of the beauties of that admirable work.

To conclude this subject, I would suggest that it is better to have a few good books than many ordinary ones. It is not well for young people to have a great variety. If there are but few books in the house, and those are interesting, they will be read over and over again, and well remembered. A perpetual succession of new

works induces a habit of reading hastily and carelessly ; and, of course, their contents are either forgotten, or jumbled up in the memory in an indistinct and useless form.

Franklin said wisely, " Any book that is worth reading once, is worth reading twice ;" and there is much good sense in the Roman maxim, " Read *much*, but do not read *many books* *."

CHAPTER VIII.

POLITENESS

IN politeness, as in many other things connected with the formation of character, people in general begin at the wrong end ; instead of beginning with the heart, and leaving the manners to be formed from the natural expression of good feelings and good principles, they begin with the manners, and trust the heart to chance influences. The *golden rule* contains the very life and soul of politeness. Children may be taught to make a graceful courtesy, or a gentlemanly bow,—but, unless they have likewise been taught kindness of heart, and gentleness of disposition, modesty in their own pretensions, and respect for the feelings and opinions of others, their politeness will be entirely artificial, and will be used only when it is their interest to use it. On the other hand, a truly benevolent, kind-hearted person will always be distinguished for what

* Pliny, who gave this advice, lived long before the invention of printing ; if such a precaution were necessary *then*, what would he say *now* ?

is called native politeness, though he may be entirely ignorant of the conventional forms of society.

I by no means think graceful manners of small importance. They are the outward form of refinement in the mind, and good affections in the heart; and as such must be lovely. But when the form exists without the vital principle within, it is as cold and lifeless as flowers carved in marble.

Politeness, either of feeling or of manner, can never be taught by set maxims. Every-day influence, unconsciously exerted, is all-important in forming the characters and manners of children. If you are habitually polite, your children will become so, by the mere force of imitation, without any specific directions on the subject. Your manners at home should always be such as you wish your family to have in company. Politeness will then be natural to them; they will attain it without thinking about it. But when certain outward observances are urged in words, as being necessary to make us pleasing to others, they assume an undue importance, and the unworthiness of the motive fosters selfishness. Besides, if our own manners are not habitually consistent with the rules we give, our rules will be of little avail; they will in all probability be misunderstood, and will certainly be forgotten. But although true politeness cannot be taught by rules for external behaviour, yet the want of it may be discovered and made apparent by the application of such rules, which, in this way, are rendered valuable, and ought for this reason to be studied, though without ever losing sight of the principles or true motives on which they are founded, and for the sake of which alone they ought to be enforced. And care should also be taken to distinguish between those rules which are merely

arbitrary and conventional in particular countries, or in particular societies, and those which are of universal obligation. All established rules and practices should be observed in the society in which they are established, for the simple reason that it promotes happiness, by placing all parties at their ease, unless the practices are such as to offend against some rule of Christian morality, which ought always to be maintained inviolate.

Foreigners charge the English, as well as the Americans, with a want of courtesy to each other in their usual intercourse; and there is, doubtless, some truth in the accusation. On all great occasions, perhaps, we are ready to assist each other; but politeness consists in making the principles of Christianity our rule of conduct in the smaller daily occurrences of life, and it must be admitted that the French manage this much more gracefully and happily than we do. Life is chiefly made up of small events. The chain of our existence is composed of innumerable little links; and if we rudely twist them, we injure its strength, as well as mar its beauty.

The happiest married couples I have ever known were those who were scrupulous in paying to each other those minute attentions, which are generally thought too trifling to be of any importance; and yet on these very trifles depended the delicacy and refinement, and consequently the perfection of their continued love for each other. A birth-day present, accompanied with a kind look or word—reserving for each other the most luxuriant fruit, or the most comfortable chair—nay, even the habit of always saying, “Will you have the goodness?” and “Thank you”—all these seemingly trivial things have a great effect on domestic felicity, and on the manners of children. Early habits of preferring others to ourselves are very important.

A child should always be taught to give away the *largest* slice of his apple, or his cake, and to take his whistle immediately from his mouth, if a sick little brother or sister is anxious for it. I believe the easy and natural politeness of the French may, in a great measure, be attributed to their remarkable care in forming such early habits of self-denial in trifles.

I cordially approve of the good old fashion of never saying "Yes," or "No," to those older than ourselves, bluntly, without some civil addition or qualification. It appears to me peculiarly proper and becoming for young persons always to rise when addressed by those whose age or character demands respect. I am surprised to see how seldom the young give an aged person the wall, when they meet in the street; and still more so when I see them unceremoniously push by their elders, while entering or leaving a room. .

It is a graceful habit for children to say to each other, "Be so kind as to do this or that," and "I thank you." I do not like to see 'prim, artificial children; there are few things I dislike so much as a dandy in miniature, male or female. But the habit of good manners by no means implies affectation or restraint. It is quite as easy to say, "Pray," or, "If you please, will you give me a piece of cake," as to say, "I want a piece of cake."

The idea that constant politeness would render social life too stiff and restrained, springs from a false estimate of politeness. True politeness is perfect ease and freedom. It simply consists in treating others on all, even the most trivial occasions, with gentleness, modesty, respect, and kindness; in short, just as you love to be treated yourself. It is of some consequence that your daughter should know how to enter and leave a room gracefully, according

to the fashion or usage of the country, and the time in which you live; but it is of prodigiously more consequence that she should be in the habit of treating others with respect, and if she has this last habit, a very little intercourse with the world will teach her the first.

I believe nothing tends to make people so awkward as too much anxiety to please others. Nature is graceful; and art or affectation can never produce manners half so pleasing, as will result naturally and spontaneously from a well-instructed mind, and a well-regulated heart. The very perfection of art is to imitate nature as closely as possible; and how much better it is to have the reality than the imitation! I shall probably be reminded that the best and most unaffected people are often constrained and awkward in company to which they are unaccustomed. I answer, the reason is, they do not act like themselves—they are afraid they shall give offence, by failing to observe some of the conventional forms of a society which is new to them. They attach too great importance to outward and conventional forms. It would be enough to avoid offence, if they showed a wish to conform themselves to their new associates in all things. Their mistakes would not be offensive, and if they were made a subject of ridicule, true politeness would find the means of shaming and repelling such rudeness, and would feel no constraint from the fear of it. No character is more dignified and unassailable than that of a man truly polite. Every kind-hearted person is respectable and pleasing so long as he is perfectly natural. I will make no exception: good nature is *always* graceful. The most secluded and the most ignorant have some charm about them, so long as they affect nothing—so long as they speak and act from the

impulses of their own honest hearts, without any anxiety as to what others think of it.

Coarseness and vulgarity are the effects of bad education of the heart and affections, but these may be cultivated in the hovel as well as in the palace; and will produce even there a natural politeness, the charms of which cannot be concealed by the most tattered drapery, or the most uncouth exterior.

As far as is consistent with your situation and duties, early accustom your children to an intercourse with strangers. I have seen young persons who were respectful and polite at home, seized with a most painful and unbecoming bashfulness, as soon as a guest entered. To avoid this evil, allow children to accompany you as often as possible, when you make calls and social visits. Occasional interviews with intelligent and cultivated individuals have a great influence on early character and manners, particularly if parents evidently place a high value upon acquaintances of that description. I have known the destiny of a whole family changed for the better, by the friendship of one of its members with a person of superior advantages and correct principles.

But it must be remembered that a call, or a social visit, may be made injurious, if children are encouraged in showing off, or constantly habituated to hearing themselves talked about. Much as the failing has been observed and laughed at, it is still too common for mothers to talk a great deal about their children. The weariness with which strangers listen to such domestic accounts is a slight evil compared with the mischief done to children, by inducing them to think themselves of so much importance: they should never be taught to consider them-

selves of any consequence, except at home in the bosom of their own families, and there only as beings formed for moral and intellectual improvement, and for social happiness.

Nothing tends to foster the genuine politeness which springs from good feeling, so much as scrupulous attention to the aged. There is something extremely delightful and salutary in the free and happy intercourse of the old and young. The freshness and enthusiasm of youth cheers the dreariness of age; and age can return the benefit a hundred-fold, by its mild maxims of experience and wisdom. In general, youth and age are too much separated; the young flock together, and leave the old to themselves. We seem to act upon the principle that there cannot be sympathy between these two extremes of life; whereas there may be, in fact, a most charming sympathy—a sympathy more productive of mutual benefit than any other in the world.

The aged, from the loneliness of their situation, the want of active employment, and an enfeebled state of health, are apt to look upon the world with a gloomy eye; and sometimes their gloom is not unmingled with bitterness; hence arises frequently that harshness and asperity towards the follies of youth, which is so universally complained of, but which would less frequently occur if they were accustomed to gentleness, attention, and deference from the young; they would be softened by juvenile love, and cheered by juvenile gaiety. Such intercourse sheds a quiet brightness on the decline of life, like sunshine on a weather-beaten tree, or a moss-covered dwelling. What is there on earth more beautiful than an aged person full of content and benevolence!

In China, it is the custom for young people always to

stand with the head uncovered in the presence of their seniors; and persons are now living in England, during whose early years children were not permitted to sit in presence of their parents. Perhaps this is carrying the outward forms of respect to an inconvenient excess; but the *principle* is true to nature and goodness. The mere circumstance of being old should ensure peculiar deference and attention even from strangers. It is considered a sign of a good heart to love little children; I think spontaneous kindness for the aged is a much better proof. I have seen gentlemen, who, in mixed companies, always bestowed the largest share of attention upon the old and neglected. Had I a beloved daughter, I would choose such a man for her husband.

The German custom of giving Christmas presents to parents, brothers, and sisters, has a happy influence upon the affections, and of course upon the manners. The enjoyment is entirely anti-selfish—it consists in the experience, that “it is more blessed to *give* than to *receive*.” What can be purer than the eager pleasure of a group of children busy in preparing a gift for a parent, and anxious to keep their little secret, in order to produce a joyful surprise? If their offerings are of their own manufacture, a double good is produced; both ingenuity and love are excited, and the motive that excites them is holy. It has a good effect for parents to place a superior value upon whatever children make themselves—such as all the varieties of needle-books, pin-cushions, boxes, &c.

One very prevalent fault among children is a want of politeness to domestics. Young people should not, from mere whim and caprice, be allowed to make demands upon the time and patience of those who are hired to attend upon the family. They should make no unnecessary

trouble in the kitchen ; and when they ask for any thing, they should speak politely—saying, “ Will you have the goodness ? ” “ I thank you,” &c. Such conduct greatly tends to make domestics more respectful, kind, and obliging.

Miss Edgeworth, in her work on Education, recommends that children should never be allowed to speak a single word to a servant ; and that they should be kept in a part of the house entirely remote, for fear of contamination. But such a system cannot be carried into effect. A child cannot know the nature of such an injunction,—his inexperienced mind cannot form an idea of the frightful and vulgar stories, which his mother dreads his hearing. Still it is very injurious to children to make companions of the domestics in their parents’ house, not on account of their difference in station,—but because it rarely happens that servants are well educated, even with regard to their station, and, except for those servants who attend our nurseries, if we can procure those who are sober, and honest, and well instructed to perform the particular service required of them, we cannot, in general, enter much into the question of their education in other respects. If I were sure that my servants were conscientious and kind-hearted, and never told vulgar or superstitious stories, I should never object to children of any age holding intercourse with them. And even if they were strangers to me, I would never *forbid* a child’s going into the kitchen, or *advise* him not to talk with servants. It would be better for a child to run the risk of hearing a vulgar, or superstitious story, than to infest his spirit with pride.

But though I would never give children any rules to this effect, I would by a *silent influence* keep them with myself as much as possible. I would make the parlour

pleasant to them—I would supply them with interesting employment—I would do every thing to promote full confidence and companionship between them and their parents—I would make the bond between brothers and sisters strong, by fostering mutual love, by teaching them to speak politely, to act kindly, to regard each other's wants, and respect each other's property. By these means, the mind and the heart would be so occupied, that children would have no temptation to spend their time in the kitchen. But my motive for pursuing such a guarded course, would be no idea of superiority, for I acknowledge no superiority amongst mankind, except in degrees of goodness; I would withdraw them from the influence of domestics as from that of any other strangers, merely because there is a risk that such influence may be hurtful to their principles. A domestic who is worthy of being kept in your house, is worthy of being treated with kindness and politeness; and children should be early instructed never to speak rudely, or make unnecessary demands upon her time and patience.

In connexion with politeness, I would again allude to the great importance of *habits of observation*. What is called native politeness is entirely the result of kind feelings combined with habits of attention, for how can we respect the feelings of others, unless we have made ourselves acquainted with them by observation? Every body sees that men of the world have a wonderful facility in adapting themselves to all varieties of character. Their faculty of pleasing every body seems like instinct, yet, in fact, it is merely the result of close observation. People who have bad hearts can attain this power, and exert it when they choose, from no other excitement but vanity, or self-interest. But this is no reason why the same

power should not be exerted to good purposes, and with good motives.

A ready discrimination of character is attained by habits of observation ; and merely from a want of these habits, excellent-hearted people often make blunders painful to themselves and others. We all know by our own feelings, that it is not pleasant to have the attention of strangers called to any personal defect we may have ; yet well-meaning people will sometimes strangely persist in such conversation.

Some people are singularly perverse in praising such qualities as their hearers do not possess, and perhaps have no means of possessing. For instance, talking to the poor about the great power and influence of wealth,—enlarging upon the prodigious advantages of intelligence and learning to the uneducated—and flying into raptures about beauty in presence of the ugly and deformed. Now, in all these instances, a little *attention* to the movements of our own minds would teach us at once how to apply the golden rule.

In our intercourse with others, it should be our object to discover what subjects of conversation would be agreeable to them, not what we wish ourselves to *say*. Literary people are often unpleasant companions in mixed society, because they frequently have not the power of adapting themselves to others. They have given their attention to books more than to characters ; and they talk on such subjects as please themselves, without thinking whether they will please others. What is called affectation and pedantry, is often mere heedlessness and want of observation.

Mrs. Madison was esteemed the most thoroughly polite woman in America. Others might perhaps enter a room as gracefully, or superintend at table with as much dignity ;

the secret of her power lay in her wonderful adaptation to all sorts of characters. She was emphatically an *observing woman*. As Jefferson had no wife, she presided sixteen years at Washington*; during all which time, she is said never to have forgotten the most trifling peculiarities of character, that had once come under her observation: she always remembered them, and fashioned her conversation accordingly. Some may object to the exercise of this power, lest it should lead to insincerity; and the charge may well be brought against that kind of false politeness, which springs merely from a love of popularity, or the more detestable motive of self-interest. But politeness is not the only good thing that is occasionally corrupted by an unworthy motive. All precious coins have counterfeits. When we are polite to others for *our own sakes*, or from any other motive than the love of God, who has enjoined us to love one another, we are deceitful. It is right to cherish good-will toward all our fellow-creatures, and to endeavour to make them as happy as we conscientiously can. The outward forms of politeness are but the expressions of such feelings as should be in every human heart. It is wrong to tell people we love them dearly, when in fact we care nothing about them; or to urge them to visit our houses, when we do not want to see them, unless we are quite sure that our desire to please them is really such as to supersede our own inclination in this particular instance. But we are bound to be kind and attentive to all our fellow-creatures, when they come in our way, and to avoid giving them any unnecessary pain, by our manners or conversation.

* When the president has no wife, or daughter, at Washington, the lady of the highest officer in the cabinet presides at the mansion on all state occasions.

In order to teach children the right sort of politeness, it must be taught through the agency of a pure motive. They should not be taught to observe and respect the feelings of others for the sake of making themselves pleasing, but merely because it is kind and benevolent to do so.

If I saw a child point out the patched or ragged garment of a poor companion, I would not say, "You must not laugh at her clothes; if you do, she will think you are proud,"—I would say, "It grieves me very much to see you so unkind. If your mother were poor, and could not afford to supply you with good clothes, would it not hurt your feelings to be laughed at? Does not the Bible tell you to do to others as you would wish to have them do to you? You must observe this precious rule in little things, as well as in great things."

From the foregoing hints, it will be seen that true politeness is the spontaneous movement of a good heart and an observing mind. Benevolence will teach us tenderness towards the feelings of others, and habits of observation will enable us to judge promptly and easily what those feelings are.

Outward politeness may be learned in set forms; but, at the best, it will be hollow and deceptive. Genuine politeness, like every thing else that is genuine, must come from the heart.

CHAPTER IX.

BEAUTY—DRESS—SOCIETY, &c.

WHEREVER there is hypocrisy, or an apparent necessity for hypocrisy, there is something wrong. In the management of children, are we sincere on the subject of beauty? When we see a handsome person, or a handsome animal, our children hear us eagerly exclaim, "Oh, how beautiful!" "What a lovely creature!" "What pretty eyes!" "What a sweet mouth!" &c. Yet when children say any thing about beauty, we tell them it is of no value at all,—that they must not think any thing about beauty,—"handsome is that handsome does," &c.

The influence would be very contradictory, did not the eagerness of our exclamations and the coldness of our moral lessons both tend to the same result; they both give children an idea that the subject is of great importance. "My mother *tells* me beauty is of no consequence, because she thinks I shall be vain; but I am sure she and everybody else seem to *think* it is of consequence," said a shrewd little girl of ten years old.

It certainly is natural to admire beauty, whether it be in human beings, animals, or flowers; it is a principle implanted within the human mind, and we cannot get rid of it. Beauty is the outward form of goodness; and that is the reason we love it instinctively, without thinking why we love it. The truth is, beauty is really of *some* consequence; but of very small consequence compared with good principles, good feelings, and good understanding.

In this manner children ought to hear it spoken of. There should be no *affected* indifference on this or any other subject. If a child should say, "Every body loves Jane Snow,—she is so pretty," I would answer, "Is Jane Snow a good, kind little girl? I should be pleased with her pretty face, and should want to kiss her, when I first saw her; but if I found she was cross and selfish, I should not love her; and I should not wish to have her about me." In this way the attention will be drawn from the subject of beauty, to the importance of goodness; and there is no affectation in the business,—the plain truth is told. We do love beauty at first sight; and we do cease to love it, if it be not accompanied by amiable qualities.

Beauty is so much more obvious than the qualities of the mind and heart, and meets so much more of spontaneous admiration, that we should be very much on our guard against enhancing the value of a gift, which is almost unavoidably over-rated. But we must remember that our common and unguarded modes of speaking are what form the opinions of a child; moral maxims have little or no effect, if they are in opposition to our usual manner of speaking and acting. For this reason, I would never call attention to beauty; and if dwelt upon with delighted eagerness by others, I would always remark, "She looks as if she had a sweet *disposition*, or a bright *mind*,"—thus leading the attention from mere outward loveliness to moral and intellectual beauty. I would even avoid constantly urging a child to put on a bonnet, lest she should be tanned. I should prefer the simple reason, "It is proper to wear a bonnet out of doors; do not you know your mother always wears one, when she goes out?" I would rather a girl should have her face tanned and

freckled by heat, than have her mind tanned and freckled by vanity.

Perhaps there is no gift with which mortals are endowed, that brings with it so much danger as beauty, in proportion to the usefulness and happiness it produces. It is so rare for a belle to be happy, or even contented, after the season of youth is past, that it is considered almost a miracle. If your daughter is handsome, it is peculiarly necessary that she should not be taught to attach an undue importance to the dangerous gift ; and if she is plain, it certainly is not for her happiness to consider it as a misfortune.

For the reasons above given, I would restrain myself in expressing admiration of beauty ; and when others expressed it, I would always ask, " Is she good ? " " Is she amiable ? " &c. I would even act upon this system towards a very little child. I would not praise the beauty of his kitten ; and if he himself said, " Oh, what a pretty puss ! How I love her ? " I would answer, " She is a pretty puss, and a good puss. If she were cross, and scratched me every time I touched her, I should not love her, though her fur is so pretty." All this caution is perfectly consistent with truth. I would never say that beauty was of no consequence in my opinion ; because I could not say it truly.

With regard to dress, as in most other cases, a medium between two extremes is desirable. A love of finery and display is a much more common fault than neglect of personal appearance ; both should be avoided. Some parents teach their children to judge every body's merit by their dress ; they do not, of course, say it, in so many direct words—but their *influence* produces that effect.

Others go to the opposite extreme, and represent any attention to dress as unworthy of a strong mind ; becoming costume is in their eyes a mark of frivolity. I hardly know which of the two extremes is the worse. Extravagance in dress does great mischief both to fortune and character ; but want of neatness, and want of taste, are peculiarly disgusting. If finery betrays a frivolous mind, untidiness and bad taste certainly betray an ill-regulated one. Neatness and taste naturally proceed from a love of order ; and a man or a woman, of well-regulated mind, can no more be ill-dressed, or wanting in this outward mark of respect for their own persons, than they can be deficient in true politeness, or the outward marks of respect for others. The truth of this observation becomes obvious in the extreme slovenliness and disorder always manifested in the dress of persons decidedly of unsound minds. A mother should not talk about dress, for the same reasons that she should not talk about beauty ; but she should be careful to have her own dress always neat and well-fitted, and to cultivate a pure and delicate taste in the choice of colours. By these means, children will form the habit of dressing well, without ever thinking much about it ; the habit will be so early formed, that it will seem like a gift of nature. Miss Hamilton gives, in one short sentence, all that can be said upon the subject ; she says, “ Always dress in good taste ; but let your children see that it employs very little of your time, less of your thoughts, and none at all of your affections.”

The wish to place children in as good society as possible is natural and proper ; but it must be remembered that the society of the great or the wealthy is not always *good* society. If your manners and conversation imply more respect for wealth than for merit, your children, of course,

will choose their acquaintances and friends accordingly. Let your family see that you most desire the acquaintance of those who have correct principles, good manners, and the power of imparting information. I have heard mothers say, "To be sure Mr. and Mrs. — do not bear a very good character, but they live in a good style; they give beautiful parties; and it is very convenient to have the friendship of such people." What sort of morality can be expected of a family who have been accustomed to such maxims? What heartless, selfish, unprincipled beings are formed by such lessons! If they do not succeed in attaining the splendour they have been taught to covet, they will be envious, jealous, and miserable; if they do attain it, the most that can be said is, they will spend their thousands in trying to *appear* happy before the world.

Human ambition, and human policy, labour after happiness in vain; goodness is the only foundation to build upon. The wisdom of past ages declares this truth, and our own observation confirms it; all the world acknowledge it; yet how few, how very few, are willing to act upon it! We *say* we believe goodness is always happiness, in every situation of life, and that happiness is our chief study; we know that wealth and distinction do not bring happiness; but we are anxious that our children should possess them, because they *appear* to confer enjoyment. What a motive for immortal beings!

If the inordinate love of wealth and parade be not checked among us, it will be the ruin of our country, as it has been, and will be, the ruin of thousands of individuals. What restlessness, what discontent, what bitterness, what knavery and crime, have been produced by this eager passion for money! Mothers! as you love your children,

and wish for their happiness, be careful how you cherish this unquiet spirit, by speaking and acting as if you thought wealth the greatest good. Teach them to consider money valuable only for its use ; and that it confers respectability only when it is used well. Accustom them to regard their own little property as things held in trust for the benefit and pleasure of their companions—that one principal advantage of having any thing to call their own is that they may use it for the good of others. If this spirit were more inculcated, we should not hear children so often say, “Let that alone ; it is mine, and you sha’n’t have it.” Neither should we see among men such an unprincipled scrambling for wealth—such willingness to cast off the nearest and dearest relations in the pursuit of fashionable connexions—such neglect of unfortunate merit, and such servile adulation to successful villany.

But there are always two sides to a question. If it is pernicious to make money, and fashion, and rank, the standards of respectability, it is likewise injurious and wrong to foster a prejudice against the noble, the wealthy, and the fashionable. If we experience the slightest degree of pleasure in discovering faults or follies in those above us, there certainly is something wrong in our own hearts. Never say to your family, “Such a one feels above us,” —“Such a one is too proud to come and see us,” &c. In the first place, perhaps it is not true ; for I know by experience, that the poor are apt to be unreasonably suspicious of the rich ; they begin by being cold and proud to their wealthy friends and acquaintances, from an apprehension that the wealthy mean to be cold and proud to them ; and even if it be true that a rich neighbour is haughty, or insolent, you should be careful not to indulge bad passions, because he does. Your business is with your

own heart—keep that pure—and measure out to the rich man, as well as the poor man, whatever respect and regard you would wish yourself to receive, if you were in his place, without troubling yourself to conjecture whether he will make you a suitable return.

Do not suffer your mind to brood over the external distinctions of society. Neither seek nor avoid those who are superior in fortune; meet them on the same ground as you do the rest of your fellow-creatures. There is a dignified medium between cringing for notice, and acting like a cat that puts up her back and spits, when she sees a dog at a distance, though it may have no design of coming near to her.

Perhaps I say more on this subject than is necessary; but I am induced to say it, from having closely observed the effect produced on society, by the broad and open field of competition in a free country. All blessings are accompanied with disadvantages; and it is the business of the judicious to take the good and leave the evil. In a free country, every man can make his own station. This is, indeed, a blessing. But what are some of the attendant dangers? Look at that parent, who is willing to sacrifice her comfort, her principles, nay, even her pride, for the sake of pushing her children into a little higher rank of life. And look at another, too independent for such a course. Hear how the latter loves to rail about the aristocracy—how much pleasure he takes in *showing* contempt for the rich. Is his own heart right? I fear not. I fear that unbending independence, so honourable in itself, is mixed with a baser feeling. The right path is between extremes. I would never creep in at a side-door, neither would I refuse to enter at the front when it was opened for my reception.

Poverty and wealth have different temptations, but they are equally strong. The rich are tempted to pride and insolence ; the poor to jealousy and envy. The envious and discontented poor invariably become haughty and overbearing when rich ; for selfishness is equally at the bottom of these opposite evils. Indeed, it is at the bottom of all manner of evils.

CHAPTER X.

MANAGEMENT DURING THE TEENS.

THE period from twelve to sixteen years of age is extremely critical in the formation of character, particularly with regard to daughters. The imagination is then all alive, and the affections in full vigour, while the judgment is as yet uninformed by observation, and enthusiasm has learned no moderation from experience. During this important period, a mother cannot be too watchful. As much as possible, she should keep a daughter *under her own eye*; and, above all things, she should encourage *entire confidence towards herself*. This can be done by a ready sympathy with youthful feelings, and by avoiding all unnecessary restraint and harshness. I believe it is extremely natural for a daughter to choose her mother in preference to all other friends and confidants; but if by harshness, indifference, or an unwillingness to make allowance for youthful feeling, she finds herself driven from that holy resting-place, which nature has provided for her security, the greatest danger is to be apprehended. Nevertheless, I would not have mothers too indulgent, from the fear of weaning the affections of children. This is not the way to gain the perfect love of young people; a judicious parent is always better beloved, and more respected, than a foolishly indulgent one. The real secret is, for a mother never to sanction the slightest error, or imprudence, but at the same time to keep her heart warm and fresh, ready to sympathize with all the innocent gaiety and enthusiasm of youth. *Salutary* restraint, but not *unnecessary* restraint, is desirable.

I will now proceed to state what appears to me peculiarly important at the age I have mentioned; and I trust the hints I may suggest will prove acceptable to judicious parents. Heedlessness is so commonly the fault of the teens, that I shall first mention the great importance of habits of order, and neatness. The drawers, trunks, and work-box of a young lady should be occasionally inspected, for the purpose of correcting any tendency to wastefulness, or untidiness. Particular care should be taken of the teeth; they should be washed with a clean brush and water, at least twice a day; to cleanse them just before retiring to rest promotes sweetness of breath, and tends to preserve them from decay. Buttons off, muslins wrinkled, the petticoat below the edge of the gown, shoe-strings broken, and hair loose and straggling, should never pass unnoticed. Serious advice from a father on these subjects does more good than any thing else. Smooth, well-arranged hair, and feet perfectly neat, give a genteel, tasteful appearance to the whole person.

A dress distinguished for simplicity and freshness is abundantly more lady-like than the ill-placed furbelows of fashion. It is very common to see vulgar, empty-minded people perpetually changing their dresses, without ever acquiring the air of a gentlewoman. If there is simplicity in the choice of colours,—if clothes fit well, and are properly pinned, tied and arranged,—if they always have a neat, fresh look,—and above all, if the head and the feet are always in order,—nothing more is required, as far as dress is concerned, for a perfectly lady-like appearance.

Nothing tends to produce a love of order so much as the very early habits of observation, and attention to

trifles, which I have so particularly urged in various parts of this book. I would teach a daughter to observe such trifling things as the best manner of opening a new piece of tape; and I would take every precaution to conquer the spirit that leads young people to say, "I don't care," "No matter how it is done,"—&c.

I have, in a previous chapter, spoken of the effect which habits of observation have upon politeness of manner; and I cannot, while speaking of an age peculiarly liable to affectation, pass by the subject of good manners without saying a few words more concerning that most disgusting and injurious fault. Let all your influence be exerted to check the slightest instance of affectation. No matter whether it be affectation of goodness, of learning, of sentiment, of enthusiasm, of simplicity, or of gracefulness.—It will start up in a multitude of new forms, like the fabled heads of the hydra, and creep upon you with all the insidiousness of the serpent. It springs from a natural propensity to imitation, and a desire to please, implanted in us for good ends, but capable, like all other good things, of being perverted to evil.

There is an undefined charm and fascination in all the early developements of a young woman, which procures, from a fond parent especially, indulgence even for her faults; and many a character is ruined and destroyed by its own natural sweetness. The success which attends the early efforts of imitation, and the approbation they excite, tempt a girl to study and improve a faculty so bewitching, till at length she ceases altogether to act from the natural impulses of her heart, and every movement becomes studied, affected, and constrained. Here again we must earnestly exhort parents, but more especially fathers, to bear in mind faithfully, the sacred injunction of Scripture; "Keep thy heart

with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life*." It will not do to find fault with affectation, and require a girl to study simplicity and endeavour to be natural, intimating that, after all, simple and natural manners are most pleasing and most attractive: such a remedy is a self-contradiction, and does but aggravate the disease. The reality of virtue must be secured in the heart, and the beauty of its external manifestation may safely be intrusted to nature, who allows indeed of imitations, but never permits them to pass for the original. Nature has a quiet sincerity about her, that cannot be mistaken, or counterfeited. An absence of all *anxiety* to appear to advantage, is the very surest way to be attractive. An entire forgetfulness of self, accompanied by a good-natured wish to oblige and amuse others, produce a feeling of ease in company, and give the stamp of refined society more effectually than all the affectation in the world. Bashfulness or shyness is sometimes merely the result of a temperament naturally nervous, weak, and irritable; and for this failing there is no remedy but patient and kind encouragement, aided by as much practice in habits of social intercourse with strangers as circumstances will allow, without a degree of force which would aggravate the disorder.

But there is another fault which passes by the same name, though referable to a very different cause, and requiring very different treatment. People are bashful or shy when they are thinking about themselves and are *anxious* to appear to advantage; or are too much afraid of the opinions of others, and have too little confidence in themselves. Proud people, too, unless they have long been accustomed to take the lead in society, are very apt to behave with a sort of reserve which assumes the

* Proverbs iv. 20.

air, and obtains the name, of bashfulness ; and for these faults we must seek a remedy in an endeavour to cultivate that true modesty, which makes people forget their own claims and pretensions, and think only of what they can do to make others happy. An humble-minded and charitable Christian will always be modest, but never bashful, unless weakened by an unhealthy constitution, or from too great seclusion, and not being sufficiently accustomed to social intercourse.

Habits of order should be carried into expenses. From the time children are twelve years old, they should keep a regular account of what they receive, and what they expend. This will produce habits of care, and make them think whether they employ their money usefully. It is an excellent plan for a father, at the beginning of the year, to state what he is willing each child, above twelve years of age, should expend per quarter. At first, the greater part might be under a mother's direction, for clothes and other necessaries ; and only a small portion be at the disposal of the child. In this way, a father knows certainly what he expends for each ; and domestic discord is not likely to be produced by bills unexpectedly large. When the arrangement is once made, nothing should be added ; the hope of being helped out of difficulties brought on by thoughtlessness and extravagance, would defeat the express purpose of an allowance. A mother can generally tell very nearly what it is necessary and proper for a daughter to expend yearly ; if you find you really have not allowed enough, make larger provision the next year ; but never add to what was originally agreed upon, except under very extraordinary circumstances. At sixteen years of age, or perhaps sooner, where there is great maturity of character, a young lady may be trusted with the whole of her allow-

ance, to spend at discretion ; always, however, keeping an exact account, to be produced, if required, to her parents, at the end of the year.

Should your daughter ever become a wife, this habit will enable her to conform more easily to her husband's income. A great deal of domestic bitterness has been produced by a wife's not knowing, or not thinking, how much she expends. Every prudent man wishes to form some calculation about the expenses of his family ; and this he cannot do, if his wife keeps no accounts, or keeps them irregularly.

In connexion with this subject, I would urge the vast importance of a thorough knowledge of arithmetic among women. It is a study that greatly tends to strengthen the mind, and produce habits of necessary carefulness.

Some may think such a system could be pursued only by the wealthy ; but it is no matter whether the quarterly allowance is fifty pounds, or fifty shillings,—the principle is the same. The responsibility implied by such trust gives children more self-respect, and self-command ; it helps them to remember how much they owe to the generosity of parents ; and checks their heedlessness in the expenditure of money. But its most important use is in teaching them to be really benevolent. Children who go to a parent and ask for things to give away, may know what are kind *impulses*, but they know nothing about real benevolence of *principle*. True generosity is a willingness to deny ourselves for the benefit of others,—to give up something of our own, which we really like, for the sake of doing good. If a child has five shillings a month to expend, and gives half of it to a poor sick neighbour, instead of laying it up to buy a book, or a trinket, he knows more of real benevolence, than could be taught by

all the books and maxims in the world, or by any pleasure he could derive from a kindness done not at his own expense. When you know of any such action, let a child see that it increases your affection and respect. Do not let the hurry of business, or the pressure of many cares, keep you from expressing marked approbation. Human nature is weak, and temptation strong. All people, young as well as old, need to be cheered onward in the path of goodness; and children should never be disappointed in the innocent and salutary expectation of giving pleasure to a parent. But do not praise them in the presence of others; and do not say much about it, as if it were any great thing,—merely treat them with somewhat more than ordinary affection and confidence. Do not compensate their benevolence by making them presents. This will lead them into temptation. It will no longer be self-denial in them to give; for they will be sure they shall lose nothing in the end. They should learn to take pleasure in relinquishing their own gratifications for the benefit of others.

Children should be brought up with a dread of being dependent on the bounty of others. Young ladies, too often, think it a degradation to do any thing for their own support; and to avoid it, they are content to live with any relation, who will furnish them a home, contributing little or nothing to the welfare of the society in which they live. This is not indulging a right spirit. We ought to be resigned and cheerful in a dependent situation, when we cannot possibly provide for ourselves; but a willingness to burden others, when we can avoid it by a little exertion, is not resignation,—it is mere pride and indolence. Next to a love of usefulness, knowledge should be valued, because it multiplies our resources in

case of poverty. This unwillingness to subsist on the bounty of others should be taught as a matter of principle; it should proceed from a feeling, that all men are ordained to labour, and that we cannot justly partake of the fruits of other men's labour without rendering some equivalent.

I would make it an object so to educate children that they could, in case of necessity, support themselves respectably. For this reason, if a child discovered a decided talent for any accomplishment, I would cultivate it, if my income would possibly allow it. Every thing we add to our knowledge, or the cultivation of good taste in the practice of fine arts, adds to our means of usefulness. If a girl has a decided taste for drawing, for example, and it is encouraged, it is a pleasant resource, which will make her home agreeable, and lessen the desire for company and amusements; if she marry, it will enable her to teach her children without the expense of a master; if she live unmarried, she may gain a livelihood by teaching the art which she at first learned as a mere cultivation of taste. The same thing may be said of music, and a variety of other accomplishments, not generally deemed *necessary* in education. In all cases it is best that what is learned should be learned well. In order to do this, good masters should be preferred to cheap ones. Bad habits, once learned, are not easily corrected. It is far better that children should learn one thing thoroughly, than many things superficially. Make up your mind how much you can afford to spend for one particular thing; and when you have decided that point, spend it as far as it will go in procuring really good teachers. I believe this to be the best economy in the end. It is better to take twelve lessons from a first-rate French teacher, than to take a hundred from a bad one; because in the latter

case, bad habits of pronunciation will be learned, and probably never corrected. The same thing is true of all kinds of knowledge, solid or ornamental.

While speaking of acquirements, I would again urge the great necessity of *persevering* in whatever pursuits are commenced. Time, talent, and money, are often shamefully wasted by learning a variety of things imperfectly, which are successively abandoned, because they prove more difficult than was at first imagined; and what is worst of all, every instance of this kind, strengthens the pernicious habit of being easily discouraged by obstacles. A young lady should be very sure she knows her own mind before she begins any pursuit; but when it is once begun, it should be an unalterable law that she *must* persevere.

Perhaps some parents of moderate fortune will ask if there is no danger of unfitting girls for the duties of their station, and making them discontented with their situation in life, by teaching them accomplishments merely ornamental. For myself, I do not believe that *any* kind of knowledge ever unfitted a person for the discharge of duty, *provided that knowledge was acquired from a right motive*. It is wonderful what different results the same thing will produce, when the motives are different. No matter what is learned, provided it be acquired as a means of pleasing a parent, of becoming useful to others, of acquiring a necessary support, or generally of improving or refining the mind, or of gratifying the natural thirst for knowledge, or the desire of overcoming a difficulty. If you induce children to learn any particular thing for the sake of showing off, or being as grand as their neighbours, then, indeed, you *will* unfit them for their duties, and make them discontented with their situation. Looking

to others for our standard of happiness is the sure way to be miserable. Our business is with our own hearts, and our own motives. When I say that a decided talent for any pursuit should be encouraged, I do not mean that every whim and caprice should be indulged. Mothers often talk about giving their daughters a *taste* for music, and a *taste* for painting, when in fact they only wish to excite in them a silly ambition to have as many accomplishments to show off, as other girls have. The consequence is, such families undertake to do a multitude of things, and do nothing well. A good deal of money is spent to very little purpose; for such young ladies do not really take *pleasure* in their employment; and, consequently, they will not attain any considerable skill or perfection in it, nor derive from it any real benefit.

First, be sure that children are familiar with all the duties of their present situation; at the same time, by schools, by reading, by conversation, give them as much *solid* knowledge as you can,—no matter how much, or of what kind,—it will come into use at some time or other; and afterwards, if you can afford to indulge your children in any matter of taste, do it fearlessly, without any apprehension that it will unfit them for more important duties. Neither learning nor accomplishments do any harm to man or woman, if the *motive* for acquiring them be a proper one; on the contrary, those who know most, are apt to perform their duties best—provided the heart and the conscience have been educated as well as the understanding. A variety of knowledge (acquired from such views as I have stated) would make a man a better servant, as well as a better prime minister; and make a woman a better wife, as well as a better teacher. A selfish use of riches leads to avarice, pride, indolence, and

contempt of labour ; and a selfish use of knowledge lead to the same pride and indolence, with the addition of ridiculous pedantry, affectation, and unwillingness to conform to others. But the fault is not in the riches, or the knowledge—the difficulty lies in the *selfish use* of these advantages. If both were used but as a means intrusted to us of doing good, how different would be the result. For this reason, I should never wish children to learn anything because some of their companions were learning it. I would always offer present or future *usefulness* as a motive. For instance, if a daughter were very desirous of learning music, I would ask her *why* she desired it. If she answered, or if I had reason to think, it was because some one else was learning it, I would at once discountenance it, by telling her the motive was a very poor one ; but if she said she wished to learn, because she loved it very much, or thought it would be useful to herself, or agreeable to others, I would readily enter into her wishes.

I have known young ladies on whom a good deal had been expended, who more than repaid their parents by their assistance in educating younger brothers or sisters ; and is not such a preparation likely to make the duties of a mother more pleasant and familiar to them ? In some cases the acquirements and industry of one branch of the family have served to educate and bring forward all the rest ; is not such a power, well used, extremely conducive to kindness and benevolence ?

It is certainly very desirable to fit children for the station they are likely to fill, as far as a parent can judge what that station will be. In this country, it is a difficult point to decide ; for many people are in a totally different situation from what might have been expected in their childhood. However, one maxim is as safe as it is true

—that a well-informed mind is the happiest, and the most useful in all situations. Every new acquirement is something added to a solid capital. To imitate every passing fashion is a very different thing from gaining knowledge. To play a few tunes upon a piano, and paint a few gaudy flowers, does not deserve to be spoken of as a part of *education*;—a fashionable scarf, or a bright ribbon, might as well be called so. I would never have music, painting, &c., learned at all, unless they could be learned perfectly, and practised with real good taste; and since an *observing* mind is most likely to be tasteful in all the lighter and more ornamental branches, my chief aim should be to cultivate the intellectual faculties, and keep the powers of attention wide awake. If the mental faculties are thus kept vigorous by constant use, they will excel in any thing to which their strength is applied. I think it is peculiarly unwise to sacrifice comfort, benevolence, or the more solid branches of learning, to any of the elegant arts; but when you have the means of procuring all these and a little more, it is much better to spend the surplus in giving your children a new pleasure, and an additional resource against poverty, than it is to expend it in superfluous articles of dress, or furniture. The same remarks that apply to music, drawing, &c., apply to a variety of trifling acquirements, such as braiding straw, working muslin, carpet-work, marking, &c. I would teach a child to learn every innocent thing, which it is in her power to learn. If it is not wanted immediately, it can be laid by for future use. I have a strong partiality for those old-fashioned employments, marking and carpet-work. The formation of the figures, counting the threads, and arranging the colours, require a great deal of care; and the necessity of close attention, and

regular employment, is extremely salutary to young people.

Important as a love of reading is, there are cases where it ought to be checked. It is mere selfishness and indolence to neglect active duties for the sake of books; we have no right to do it. Children of a languid and lazy temperament, are sometimes willing to devote all their time to reading, for the sake of avoiding bodily exertion; such a tendency should be counteracted by endeavouring to interest them in active duties and amusements. "Particular pains should be taken to induce them to attend to the feelings of others. Whatever services and attentions they exact from others, they should be obliged in their turn to pay." Out-of-door exercise, frequent walks, and a lively attention to the beauties of nature, are very beneficial to such dispositions. On the contrary, those who have no love for quiet, mental pleasures, should be attracted by interesting books and entertaining conversation. A mother needs to be something of a philosopher. In other, and better words, she needs a great deal of practical good sense, and habits of close observation.

With regard to what is called a *natural genius* for any particular employment, I think it should be fostered, wherever it is decidedly shown; but great care should be taken to distinguish between a strong natural bias and the sudden whims and caprices, to which companions, or accidental circumstances, have given birth. Many people think that each individual has the gift to do some one particular thing better than others, if he could but discover what that gift is; and it is certain that we all do best what we strongly love to do. Men seldom become very great in any pursuit they do not love with the whole

heart and soul ; and it is, therefore, very desirable to find out the bias of character in early life. This is not to be done by asking questions of a child, but by quietly observing what he most delights in, and what he asks about most frequently and eagerly. In most cases, however, it will be found that the strongest natural inclination is to idleness, which must be conquered by infusing a spirit of duty and obedience, on true Christian principles, before any other natural inclination will show itself, to any useful purpose.

With regard to lessons, reading, and work, the attention of children should be kept awake by talking with them, asking questions on the subject, and showing them the best and most convenient methods of doing whatever they are about ; but great care should be taken not to help them too much. No more assistance than is absolutely necessary should be given. Leave them to their own ingenuity. Young people will always be helpless, if they are not obliged to think and do for themselves.

With regard to the kind of books that are read, great precaution should be used. No doubt the destiny of individuals has very often been decided by volumes accidentally picked up and eagerly devoured at a period of life when every new impression is powerful and abiding. For this reason, parents, or some guardian friends, should carefully examine every volume they put into the hands of young people. In doing this, the disposition and character of the child should be considered. If a bold, ambitious boy is dazzled by the trappings of war, and you do not wish to indulge his disposition to be a soldier, avoid placing in his way fascinating biographies of military heroes ; for the same reason do not strengthen a

restless, roving tendency, by accounts of remarkable voyages and adventures. I do not mean to speak disparagingly of Voyages and Travels; I consider them the most attractive and instructive books in the world. I merely suggest a caution against strengthening and dangerous bias of character.

A calm, steady temperament may be safely indulged in reading works of imagination,—nay, perhaps, requires such excitement to rouse it sufficiently,—but an excitable, romantic disposition should be indulged sparingly in such reading. To forbid all works of fiction cannot do good. There is an age when all mortals, of any sense or feeling, are naturally romantic and imaginative. This state of feeling, instead of being violently wrestled with, should be carefully guided and restrained, by reading only the purest and most eloquent works of fiction. The admirable and unfortunate Lady Russell, in a letter, written on the anniversary of her husband's execution, says, “At such seasons I do not *contend* with frail nature, but *keep her as innocent as I can*.” This rule may be wisely applied to that period of life, when young people, from the excess of mental energy, and the riot of unwearied fancy, are most bewitched to read novels.

Never countenance, by word or example, that silly affected sensibility which leads people to faint or run away at the sight of danger or distress. If such a habit is formed, try to conquer it by reasoning, and by direct appeals to good feeling. Nothing can be more selfish than to run away from those who are suffering, merely because the sight is painful. True sensibility leads us to overcome our own feelings for the good of others.

Great caution should be used with regard to the habits of talking in a family. Talk of *things* rather than of

persons, lest your children early imbibe a love of gossiping. Particularly avoid the habit of speaking ill of others. We acquire great quickness of perception in those things to which we give attention in early life; and if we have been in the habit of dwelling on the defects of others, we shall not only be ill-natured in our feelings, but we shall actually have the faculty of perceiving blemishes much more readily than virtues. This tendency always to look on the black side is a very unfortunate habit, and may often be traced to the impressions made upon us in childhood.

Some people fly to the opposite extreme. From the idea of being charitable, they gloss over every thing, and make no distinction between vice and virtue. This is false charity. We should not speak well of what we do not believe to be good and true. We may avoid saying any thing of persons, unless we can speak well of them; but when we are *obliged* to discuss a subject, we should never in the least degree palliate and excuse what we know to be wrong.

It is a great mistake to think that education is *finished* when young people leave school. Education is never finished. Half the character is formed after we cease to learn from regular instructors; and at that active and eager age it is formed with a rapidity and strength absolutely startling to think of. Do you ask what forms it? I answer the every-day conversation they hear, the habits they witness, and the people they are taught to respect. Sentiments thrown out in jest, or carelessness, and perhaps forgotten by the speaker as soon as uttered, often sink deeply into the youthful mind, and have a powerful influence on future character. This is true in very early childhood; and it is peculiarly true at the period when youth is just ripening into manhood. Employ what

teachers we may, the education they receive at home will have the most permanent influence upon the character of our children. School-masters may cultivate the *intellect*; but the things said and done at home are busy agents in forming the *affections*; and the latter have infinitely more important consequences than the former.

A knowledge of domestic duties is beyond all price to a woman. Every one ought to know how to sew, to knit and mend, and cook, and superintend a household. In every situation of life, high or low, this sort of knowledge is a great advantage. There is no necessity that the gaining of such information should interfere with intellectual acquirement, or even with elegant accomplishments. A well-regulated mind can find time to attend to all. When a girl is nine or ten years old, she should be accustomed to take some regular share in household duties, and to feel responsible for the manner in which things are done,—such as mending and making her own clothes, with many other domestic occupations, which of course vary in different ranks and circumstances. This should not be done occasionally, and neglected whenever she finds it convenient; she should consider it her department. After twelve years of age, girls should begin to take turns in superintending the household, keeping an account of weekly expenses, cooking, making puddings, pies, cake, &c. To learn any thing effectually, they should actually do these things themselves,—not stand by, and see others do them. It is a great mistake in mothers to make such slaves of themselves, rather than divide their cares with their daughters. A variety of employment, and a feeling of trust and responsibility, add very much to the real happiness of young people.

All who have observed human nature closely, will agree

that a vast deal depends upon the manner in which people behave to each other during the first year after their marriage. If any little dissensions arise during that period,—if fretfulness and repining be indulged on one side, indifference and dislike on the other will surely follow,—and when this once takes place, farewell to all hopes of perfect domestic love. People may indeed agree to live peaceably and respectably together,—but the charm is broken—the best and dearest gift God gives to mortals is lost. Nothing can ever supply the place of that spontaneous tenderness, that boundless sympathy of soul, which has been so thoughtlessly destroyed. “Beware of the first quarrel,” is the best advice that was ever given to married people. Now I would ask any reflecting mother, whether a girl brought up in ignorance of household duties, is not very likely to fret, when she is first obliged to attend to them? Will not her want of practice decidedly interfere with the domestic comfort of her family, and will it not likewise be a very serious trial to her own temper? I have known many instances where young married women have been perplexed, discouraged, and miserable, under a sense of domestic cares, which, being so entirely new to them, seemed absolutely insupportable. The spirit of complaint to which this naturally gives rise, is not very complimentary to the husband; and it is not wonderful if he becomes dissatisfied with a wife, whom he cannot render happy.

In considering the important question of the comparative advantages attending school-education, it is generally allowed to be the best for boys; but where a family is well ordered, and when circumstances permit the mother to have the boys under her own eye, and either to give or procure for them proper elementary instruction, to prepare them for a public school, I would by no means have

them quit the sacred asylum of a home at an earlier age than ten years.

Without pretending to underrate the evils and dangers attending a school education for boys, it may safely be asserted, that experience proves those attending a private education to be in general much greater. The chief advantages of a school are, the greater facility with which boys learn in company with others than separately, and the order and regularity necessarily observed in a place where education is the sole object, and where the inconveniences of disorder would be such as immediately to become intolerable, whereas at home there are almost always claims upon the attention of the parents more immediately urgent, and the inconveniences of occasional interruptions are less perceptible. A further advantage of schools is the absence of that parental fondness, which is apt to degenerate into weakness; and another is the opportunity afforded by intercourse with other boys of developing the character, and of bringing into action the principles and maxims, which have been imbibed at home; of encouraging and confirming good habits, and of discovering and checking evil ones in small things; and this, too, whilst there is yet time for the character to receive aid (and controul if necessary) for the gradual improvement of our powers of discerning and preferring good from evil, before the freedom of the will is made too absolute for the approach of manhood. With these advantages the better part of our nature may become so gradually strengthened and improved, as to enable us to engage with success in the great conflict with evil, which is to be the business of our lives.

The disadvantages of private education consist principally in the absence of the advantages here enumerated,

and it is on this account that we see so many miserable failures resulting from a dread of the evils of public education, and from the most laudable and anxious endeavours to preserve boys, by a domestic education, from the contamination of bad example ; for they thus find themselves, on their arrival at manhood, suddenly exposed to dangers with which they have had no practical acquaintance, and of course against which they have no adequate defence.

With respect to girls, the case is different, because the delicacy of female virtue is such, that it can scarcely encounter evil even for victory without some loss. They are destined to live under the protection and guidance of the other sex, and their best security is their innocence. Still, much of what has been here said respecting boys is true with respect to girls ; and though private education is not attended with the same danger for them as for boys, because they do not attain their freedom so suddenly, and never attain the same absolute freedom that men do ; yet it cannot be denied that, in a thoroughly well-ordered school, girls generally attain a more perfect character than they do in a merely domestic education ; and the friendships formed at schools are, for girls as well as for boys, whose affections and principles have been properly formed at home, of the most valuable and interesting description. A domestic education can never give the same extent or freedom of choice in this most estimable blessing. For the same reason, which forms an objection to schools, I should much more strongly object to a young lady's making long visits from home, unless I had perfect confidence in every member of the family she visited, and in every person to whom they would be likely to introduce her. There is no calculating the mischief that is done by the chance acquaintances picked up in this way. If there

are sons in the families visited, the danger is still greater. I do not, of course, allude to any immorality of conduct ; I should hope girls even tolerably educated would never be guilty of any thing like immodesty. But young ladies, ignorant of the world and its vices, often do imprudent things without knowing them to be imprudent. If they have strong and enthusiastic affections, even their innocent frankness will, in all probability, be misconstrued by those who are not themselves pure and open-hearted. At all events, the frequent intercourse likely to exist between a visiter and the brothers of her friend is extremely apt to fill her head with a diseased anxiety for the admiration of the other sex, and with silly, romantic ideas about love,—ideas which have no foundation in reason or common sense. Many unhappy matches have been the result of placing young people under the influence of such sentimental excitement, before they were old enough to know their own minds. Such unions are often dignified with the name of *love-matches* ; but love has nothing to do with the business—fancy, vanity, or passion is the agent ; and vanity is by far the most busy of the three. To call such thoughtless connexions *love-matches* is a libel upon the deepest, holiest, and most thoughtful of all the passions.

In America, girls are often left to themselves at the very period when, above all others, they need a mother's care. In France, mothers always visit with their daughters ; and perhaps this species of restraint is carried to excess there, but, in general, it is much better for a very young lady never to go about alone, or visit for any length of time from home, without her mother.

Youth must have friends, and those friends, being loved ardently, will have prodigious influence. The choice

requires extreme caution. The whole of human destiny is often materially affected by those with whom we are intimate at fourteen or fifteen years of age. The safest method is not to put children in the way of those whom you dare not trust. Do not expressly forbid an acquaintance, (unless great faults of character demand such restrictions,) but endeavour, by every possible means, to withdraw your child from society which you deem improper ; occupy her with other things, and interest her in other persons. If an intimacy does spring up, notwithstanding your precautions, talk openly and reasonably about it ; and let your daughter understand what it is that you object to in the young lady's principles, manners, or habits, or in those of her friends and relations, in which she may be supposed to participate. Wealth and station should never be spoken of as either for or against forming a friendship ; the generous mind of youth never thinks of these artificial distinctions, and we certainly do wrong to teach them. Your chief safety lies in the manner in which you have educated your daughter. If her mind, heart, and conscience, have all been cultivated, she will not feel inclined to associate with the ignorant, the vulgar, and the vicious ; she will naturally seek the well-informed, the well-principled, and the truly refined, because she will have most sympathy with them.

A mother has an undoubted right to inspect her children's letters, as well as the books they read ; and if a young lady feels this to be any hardship, there is certainly something wrong, in one or other of the parties. Where young people are habitually discreet, it is not well to exercise this right very often ; but children should always feel perfectly willing that letters may be opened,

or not, at a parent's option. And parents, on their part, must consider that this entire confidence cannot naturally and reasonably be expected to exist, unless they evince perfect good-nature, and a lively sympathy with youthful feeling. Perfect confidence between parent and child is a seven-fold shield against temptation.

There is one subject, on which I am very anxious to say a great deal; but on which, for obvious reasons, I can say very little. Judging by my own observation, I believe it to be the greatest evil now existing in education. I mean the want of confidence between mothers and daughters on delicate subjects. Children, from books, and from their own observation, soon have their curiosity excited on such subjects; this is perfectly natural and innocent; and if frankly met by a mother, it would never do harm. But on these occasions it is customary either to put young people off with falsehoods, or still further to excite their curiosity by mystery and embarrassment. No young woman, who has been well educated up to that point, would be desirous of inquiring into any subject further than her mother should think necessary to inform her. But whatever degree of information may be desired, it ought not to be so refused as to risk her having recourse to domestics, or companions, by whom her mind may be shocked or injured with gross anecdotes of vice and vulgarity. Mothers are the only proper persons to convey such knowledge to a child's mind. They can do it without throwing the slightest stain upon youthful purity; and it is an imperious duty that they should do it.

A girl who receives her first ideas on these subjects from the shameless stories, or the indelicate jokes or allusions of vulgar associates, has received the first introduction to a

familiarity with vice. A diseased curiosity is excited, and undue importance given to subjects, which those she has been taught to respect think it necessary to envelope in so much mystery; she learns to think a great deal about them, and to ask a great many questions. This does not spring from any natural indelicacy; the same restless curiosity would be excited by any subject, so nearly concerning ourselves, which should be treated in the same manner. On the contrary, a well-educated girl of twelve years old would be perfectly satisfied with a frank, rational explanation from a mother. It would set her mind at rest upon the subject; and instinctive modesty would prevent her recurring to it, or making it a theme of conversation with others. Mothers are, from a morbid delicacy, too often the very last persons in the world to whom daughters think of applying in these cases. Many a young lady has fallen a victim to consumption, from a mother's bashfulness in imparting necessary precautions; and many, oh, many more, have had their minds corrupted beyond all cure.

I would not, by any means, be understood to approve of frequent conversations of this kind, between parent and child—and least of all, any thing like jesting, or double meanings. I do believe that after one modest and rational explanation, the natural purity and timidity of youth would check a disposition to talk much about it.

I would say to a young child, "I cannot tell you now, because you are not old enough to understand it. When you are old enough, I will talk with you; but you must remember to ask no one but myself. You know I always have a reason for what I say to you; and I tell you it would be very improper to talk with other people about

it. I promise you that I will explain it all to you, as soon as you are old enough to understand it."

This promise ought to be faithfully kept ; and if young people meet with any thing in books that requires explanation, they should be taught to apply to their mother, and to no one else. Such a course would, I am very sure, prevent a great deal of impurity and imprudence.

It is a bad plan for young girls to sleep with nursery maids, unless you have the utmost confidence in the good principles and modesty of your domestics. There is a strong love among vulgar people of telling secrets, and talking on forbidden subjects. From a large proportion of domestics this danger is so great, that I apprehend a prudent mother will very rarely, under any circumstances, place her daughter in the same sleeping apartment with a domestic, until her character is so much formed, that her own dignity will lead her to reject all improper conversation. A well-principled, amiable elder sister is a great safeguard to a girl's purity of thought, and propriety of behaviour. It is extremely important that warm-hearted, imprudent youth, should have a safe and interesting companion. A judicious mother can do a vast deal toward supplying this want ; but those who have such a shield as a good sister are doubly blessed.

In the chapter on politeness, I have mentioned how much little courtesies and kind attentions tend to strengthen the bonds of family love ; and I firmly believe that these things, small as they may appear singly and separately, are of very great importance. Every thing which ties the heart to home, has a good influence. Brothers and sisters cannot be too much encouraged in perfect kindness and

candour toward each other. Any slight rudeness, a want of consideration for each other's feelings, or of attention to each other's comfort, should be treated with quite as much importance as similar offences against strangers. The habit of putting on politeness to go abroad, and of throwing it off at home, does more moral mischief than we are apt to imagine. I know families, conscientious in all *great* things, who yet think it no harm to peep into each other's letters, or use each other's property without permission; yet I look upon these things as absolutely unprincipled; they are positive infringements of the golden rule.

If one member of a family have any peculiarity, or personal defect, he should be treated with unusual delicacy and affection. The best way is to treat persons remarked for any defect in such a manner, that they themselves may forget it. Perpetual consciousness of any disagreeable peculiarity increases the evil prodigiously. This is particularly true of physical imperfections; stuttering and lispings, for instance, are made ten times worse by being laughed at, or observed. It is the fear of exciting remark that makes people stutter so much worse before strangers than in the presence of their friends.

Foolish parents are too apt to show a preference for the smartest or prettiest of the family. This is exactly the reverse of right. Those who are the least attractive abroad should be the most fostered at home; otherwise they may become chilled and discouraged; and the talents and good qualities they have, may die away in the secrecy of their own bosoms, for want of something to call them into exercise.

It is the business of parents to develope each individual character, so as to produce the greatest amount of useful-

ness and happiness. It is very selfish to bestow the greatest attention upon those who are the most pleasing, or most likely to do credit to a parent in the eyes of the world. Those who are painfully diffident of themselves should be treated with distinguished regard; they should be consulted on interesting subjects, and when their opinions are injudicious, they should be met by open and manly arguments, and never treated with any degree of contempt or indifference.

To have the various members of a family feel a common interest, as if they were all portions of the same body, is extremely desirable. It is a beautiful sight to see sisters willing to devote their talents and industry to the education of brothers, or a brother willing to deny himself selfish gratifications for a sister's improvement, or a parent's comfort. Little respectful attentions to a parent tend very much to produce this delightful domestic sympathy. Nothing is more graceful than children employed in placing a father's arm-chair and slippers, or busying themselves in making every thing look cheerful against his return; and there is something more than mere looks concerned in these becoming attentions—these trifling things, where they are genuine and natural, are indications of deeply virtuous feelings, and even where they are not so, provided they are practised with a good motive, they may essentially promote and encourage such feelings. The vices and temptations of the world have far less danger for those who can recollect beloved parents and a happy home. The holy and purifying influence is carried through life, and descends to bless and encourage succeeding generations. For this reason, too much cannot be done to produce an earnest and confiding friendship between parents and children. Mothers should

take every opportunity to excite love, gratitude, and respect, towards a father. His virtues and his kindness should be a favourite theme, when talking with his children. The same rule that applies to a wife, in these respects, of course applies to a husband. It should be the business of each to strengthen the bonds of domestic union.

Every effort should be made to make home as pleasant as possible. The habit of taking turns to read interesting books aloud, while the others are at work, is an excellent plan. Music has likewise a cheerful influence, and greatly tends to produce refinement of taste. It has a very salutary effect for whole families to unite in singing before retiring to rest ; or at any other time, when it is pleasant and convenient. On such occasions, I think there should be at least one simple tune in which the little children can join without injury to their young voices. I believe the power of learning to sing is much more general than has hitherto been believed ; and the more subjects there are in which the different members of a family can sympathize, the greater will be their harmony and love.

It will probably be gathered from what I have said in the preceding pages, that I do not approve of young ladies visiting very young,—that is, being what is called *brought out*, or *going into company*. I think those parents whose situation does not make it necessary to have their daughters *brought out* at all, are peculiarly blest ; and under all circumstances, I am sure it is best for a daughter never to visit without her mother, till she is past seventeen years of age. A round of gaiety is alike fascinating and unprofitable : it wastes time, distracts attention, and makes every-day duties and pleasures appear dull and uninter-

esting. Late hours, excitement, and irregularity of food, make large demands upon health and strength, before the constitution is fully established; the mind and heart too, as well as the body, become old before their time; there is nothing new in store for the young imagination, and society loses its charm at the very age when it would naturally be most enjoyed. I do not believe it is *ever* well for girls to go into many large parties; the manners can be sufficiently formed by social intercourse with the polite and intelligent.

I greatly approve of social visiting among children and young persons. It is alike beneficial to the heart and the manners. I only wish that the mother more generally *made one* of these little parties. In general, girls think they must have an apartment to themselves when they receive visitors, or they must run off into the garden, or up stairs, because a mother's presence is an unpleasant restraint. This ought not to be. If married ladies will be familiar and cheerful, they can be extremely entertaining, as well as useful to the young. I wish this sort of companionship were more general—for I am certain it has a good influence. If a mother shows an obliging readiness to enter into the plans and amusements of her children, and their young guests, they will feel no painful restraint in her presence; while at the same time she removes from them all temptation to frivolous and improper conversation. I have known instances where a mother was the most animated and animating of all the little group. Would such instances were more frequent! It is impossible to calculate the benefits that result from having a *happy home*.

From the beginning to the end of this book, I have most earnestly represented the necessity of forming early habits of observation. It is a strong foundation, on which

any kind of character may be built, as circumstances require. It makes good writers, good painters, good botanists, good mechanics, good cooks, good housewives, good farmers—good every thing ! It fits us for any situation in which Providence may place us, and enables us to make the most of whatever advantages may come in our way. It is a sort of vital principle, that gives life to every thing.

Not fifty miles from Boston there lives a farmer, quite famous for the improvements he has made in the wild grape. He found a vine in the wood, which dozens of his neighbours passed every week, as well as he ; but he *observed* that where the oxen fed upon the vine, the grapes were largest and sweetest. He took the hint. The vine was transplanted, and closely pruned. This produced the same effect as browsing had done ; the nourishment, that in a wild state supported a great weight of vines and tendrils, went entirely to the body of the grape. His neighbours would have known this as well as he, if they had thought about it ; but they did not *observe*.

In ancient Greece the beneficial effect of closely trimming grape-vines was discovered by *observing* the extreme luxuriance of a vine, which an ass had frequently nibbled as he fed by the way-side. The man who availed himself of this hint, became celebrated throughout Greece, by means of the far-famed grapes of Nauplia ;[!] and, with less justice, statues were erected to the ass, and high honours paid to his memory. The grape had never been cultivated in America until, by a singular coincidence, an observing American farmer made the same discovery, and by the same means, that gave celebrity to the observing Grecian farmer, in very ancient times.

Even in infancy, the foundation of this important habit

should be begun, by directing the attention to the size, shape, colour, &c., of whatever objects are presented. In childhood it should be constantly kept alive, by never allowing any thing to be read, or done, carelessly ; and during the teens, when the mind is all alive and busy, very peculiar care should be taken to strengthen and confirm it. A young lady should never be satisfied with getting through with a thing some how or other ; she should know *how* she has done it, *why* she has done it, and what is the *best way* of doing it. She should use her thoughts in all her employments. There is always a best way of doing every thing ; and however trifling the occupation, this way should be discovered ; in making a shirt, for instance, she should be led to observe that it is much more convenient to put in the sleeves before the collar is set on. It is the want of these habits of observation, which makes some people so left-handed and awkward about every thing they undertake.

There is another subject quite as important—I mean *habits of reflection*. Young people should be accustomed to look into their own hearts, to be very sure what motives they act from, and what feelings they indulge. Parents can assist them very much, by seizing favourable opportunities to talk with them about what they have done, and what were their motives of action. It is a good maxim “every morning to think what we have to do, and every evening to think what we have done.” The close of the year is a peculiarly appropriate time for self-examination. Each member of the family should be encouraged at this interesting season, to think what improvements have been made, and what evils have been conquered during the year.

* * * *

One subject of great importance had nearly escaped my recollection. I mean the early habit of writing letters neatly and correctly. There are instances in abundance where the success of young persons in life may be affected by the appearance of their letters. A letter badly written, badly spelt, or badly punctuated, is a direct and abiding proof of a neglected education, or an ill-ordered mind. The receipt of such a document often makes an unfavourable impression with regard to a person's character, or capacity which is never afterwards entirely obliterated. For this reason, children should early be accustomed to give a natural and simple account, in writing, of what they have seen and done. The rules of punctuation, which are few and plain, should be particularly attended to; and any awkwardness or inelegance in the sentences should be kindly pointed out, but never ridiculed. If parents, from want of early education, feel unable to do this, they will, in all probability, know of some near relation, or intimate friend, who will occasionally attend to it. The great thing is to make children *desirous* of improvement; and this can be done by an uneducated parent, as well as by a learned one. When a strong *wish* to excel in any particular thing is once excited, there is no danger but it will find means to satisfy itself; and this is one reason why we should be more careful what we teach children to *love*, than what we teach them to *remember*.

CHAPTER XI.

MARRIAGE.

THERE is no subject connected with education which has so important a bearing on human happiness as the views young people are taught to entertain with regard to matrimonial connexions. The silly dreams of romance (half vanity, and half passion) on the one hand, and selfish calculation on the other, leave but little of just thinking and right feeling on the subject. The greatest and most prevailing error in education consists in making lovers a subject of such engrossing and disproportionate interest in the minds of young girls. "As soon as they can walk alone, they are called "little sweet-heart," and "little wife;" as they grow older, the boyish liking of a neighbour, or school-mate, becomes a favourite jest; they often hear it said how lucky such and such people are, because they "*married off*" all their family so young; and when a pretty, attractive girl is mentioned, they are in the habit of hearing it observed, "She will be married young. She is too handsome and too interesting to live single long."

I have already observed that such sort of accidental remarks do in fact *educate* children, more than direct maxims; and this applies with peculiar force to the subject of marriage. Such observations as I have quoted, give young girls the idea that there is something degrading in not being married young; or, at least, in not having had offers of marriage. This induces a kind of silly pride and restless vanity, which too often ends in ill-assorted connexions.

I had a sweet young friend, with a most warm and generous heart, but a giddy, romantic brain. Her mother was weak-minded and indulgent, and had herself been taught, in early life, to consider it the chief end and aim of existence to get married. She often reminded her daughters, that she was but sixteen when she was married, and had then refused two or three lovers. Of course, when my charming, sentimental little friend was sixteen, she began to feel uneasy under a sense of disgrace ; her pride was concerned in having an admirer as early as her mother had one ; and this feeling was a good deal strengthened by the engagements of two or three young companions. It unfortunately happened that a dashing, worthless young man was introduced to her about this time. A flirtation began, which soon ended in an offer of his hand. He said he was in good business, and she saw that he dressed well, and drove a good horse ; and, more than all, she thought what a triumph it would be to be engaged at sixteen. She married him. It was soon discovered that he was careless, dissipated, and very poor. In no respect whatever had he sympathy with my sensitive, refined, but ill-educated friend. She discovered this too late. She would have discovered it at first, had her mind been *quiet* on the subject of marriage. A wretched life might have been spared her, if her mother had left her heart to develope itself naturally, under the influences of true affection, as the lily opens its petals to the sunshine. Her marriage was called a *love-match* ; and as such was held up by ambitious parents as a salutary warning. But there never was a greater misnomer. She had not a particle of love for the man. She married him because he happened to be the first that offered, and because she felt ashamed not to be engaged as soon as her companions.

But heedless vanity and silly romance, though prolific sources of unhappy marriages, are not so disastrous in their effects as worldly ambition, and selfish calculation. I never knew a marriage expressly for money, that did not end unhappily. Yet managing mothers, and heartless daughters, are continually playing the same unlucky game. I look upon it as something more than bad policy for people to marry those to whom they are, at best, perfectly indifferent, merely for the sake of wealth; in my view it is absolutely unprincipled. Happiness cannot result from such connexions, because it ought not. A mother who can deliberately advise a daughter thus to throw away all chance of domestic bliss, would, were it not for the fear of public opinion, be willing to sell her to the Grand Sultan, to grace his seraglio. Disguise the matter as we may, with the softening epithets of "prudent match," "a good establishment," &c., it is, in honest truth, a matter of bargain and sale.

I believe men more frequently marry for love, than women; because they have a freer choice. I am afraid to conjecture how large a proportion of women marry because they think they shall not have a better chance, and dread being dependent. Such marriages, no doubt, sometimes prove tolerably comfortable; but in most cases the parties would have been far happier single. If I may judge by my own observation of such matches, marrying for a home is a most tiresome way of getting a living.

One of the worst effects resulting from *managing* about these things, is the disappointment and fancied disgrace attendant upon a failure; and with the most artful manœuvring, failures in such schemes are very frequent. Human policy sketches beautiful patterns, but she is a bad weaver; she always entangles her own web. I am

acquainted with two or three managing mothers, who have pretty children; and in the whole circle of my acquaintance, I know of none so unfortunate in disposing of their daughters. The young ladies would have married very well, if they had not been taught to act a part; now, they will either live single, or form ill-assorted, unhappy connexions. If they live single, they will probably be ill-natured and envious through life; because they have been taught to attach so much importance to the mere circumstance of getting married, without any reference to genuine affection. A woman of well-regulated feelings and an active mind, may be very happy in single life,—far happier than she could be made by a marriage of expediency. The reason old maids are proverbially more discontented than old bachelors, is, that they have generally so much less to occupy their thoughts. For this reason, it is peculiarly important, that a woman's education should furnish her with abundant resources for employment and amusement. I do not say that an unmarried woman can be as happy as one who forms, with proper views and feelings, a union, which is unquestionably the most blessed of all human relations; but I am very certain that one properly educated need not be unhappy in single life.

The great difficulty at the present day is, that marriage is made a subject of pride, vanity or expediency; whereas it ought to be a matter of free choice and honest preference. A woman educated with proper views on the subject could not be excessively troubled at not being married, unless with reference to some person for whom she entertained particular affection; but one taught to regard it as a matter of pride, is inevitably wretched, discontented, and envious,

under the prospect of being an old maid, though she may never have loved any man.

Some mothers are always talking about the cares, and duties, and sacrifices incident to married life ; they are always urging their daughters to "enjoy themselves while they are single,"—"to be happy while they have a chance," but at the same time that they give such a gloomy picture of domestic life, (making it a frightful bugbear to the young imagination,) they urge upon them the necessity of getting married for respectability's sake. They *must* be "well settled," as the phrase is. The victim must be sacrificed, because the world's opinion demands it.

I once heard a girl, accustomed to such remarks, say, with apparent sincerity, "I should like of all things to be married, if I could be sure my husband would die in a fortnight ; then I should avoid the *disgrace* of being an old maid, and get rid of the restraint and trouble of married life." Strange and unnatural as such a sentiment may appear, it was just what might have been expected from one accustomed to such selfish views of a relation so holy and blessed in its nature. It is all-important that pleasing pictures of domestic life should be presented to the young. It should be described as,—what it really is,—the home of woman's affections, and her pleasantest sphere of duty. Your daughter should never hear her own marriage speculated or jested upon ; but the subject in general should be associated in her mind with every thing pure, bright, and cheerful.

I shall be asked if I do not think it extremely desirable that daughters should marry well ; and whether the secluded, domestic education I have recommended, is not very unfavourable to the completion of such wishes,—

for how can they be admired, when they are not seen? It certainly is very desirable that daughters should marry well, because it wonderfully increases their chance of happiness. The unchangeable laws of God have made reciprocated affection necessary to the human heart; and marriage, formed with proper views, is a powerful means of improving our better nature. But I would not say or do any thing, to promote a union even of this character. I would have no scheming, no managing, no hinting. I would never talk with girls about admirers, or suffer them to associate with those who did. I would leave every thing to nature and Divine Providence,—with a full belief that such reliance would do more and better for me than I could effect by my own plans. I do not think a secluded, domestic education, is unfavourable to chances of happy matrimonial connexions. A girl with a good heart, a cultivated and well-stored mind, and modest, refined manners, cannot fail to be attractive. Make her a delightful companion to her own family; teach her to be happy at home; and trust Divine Providence to find her a suitable partner. If she has been taught to think the regulation of her own heart and mind of greater importance than any thing else, she cannot be unhappy whatever may be her lot in life; and her chance for a happy marriage will be abundantly greater than it could be made by the most adroit management.

It is evident that the greatest safeguard against improper attachments consists in the character you have given your daughter, by the manner of educating her. A refined young lady will not naturally be in love with vulgarity; nor will a pure mind have any sympathy with the vicious and unprincipled. But as vice often wears the garb of virtue, and as youth is, from its very innocence,

unsuspecting, it is incumbent upon parents to be extremely careful with what sort of young men they allow their daughters to associate. Acquaintance with any particular person should not be expressly forbidden, because it will create doubt and uneasiness in your daughter's mind, and may, perhaps, excite the very interest you wish to avoid ; but, without saying any thing on the subject, do not give her any opportunity of going to places where she will meet a fascinating young man, to whom you have decided objections ; and if you discover the smallest symptoms of mutual interest between the parties, remove her from home, if possible, to some place where her mind may become interested in new occupations. A prudent parent will always remember that it is extremely natural for young people to grow deeply interested in those they see frequently ; and that it is far easier, and better, to prevent an attachment, than it is to conquer it after it is once formed. I would never, even by the most trifling expression, lead my daughter to think of her acquaintances as future lovers ; but I should myself recollect the possibility of such a circumstance, and would not therefore encourage an acquaintance with any man, whom I should be very unwilling to see her husband. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

In affairs of this kind strong opposition is very impolitic. It rarely effects its purpose ; and if it does, it is through much misery and trouble. I doubt whether parents have morally a right to forbid, or prevent, the marriage of their children, after they are old enough to think and decide for themselves ; but I think they undoubtedly have such right until the age at which the laws of the land declare them to be in other respects free and independent agents. But where this is done, it should be with great mildness

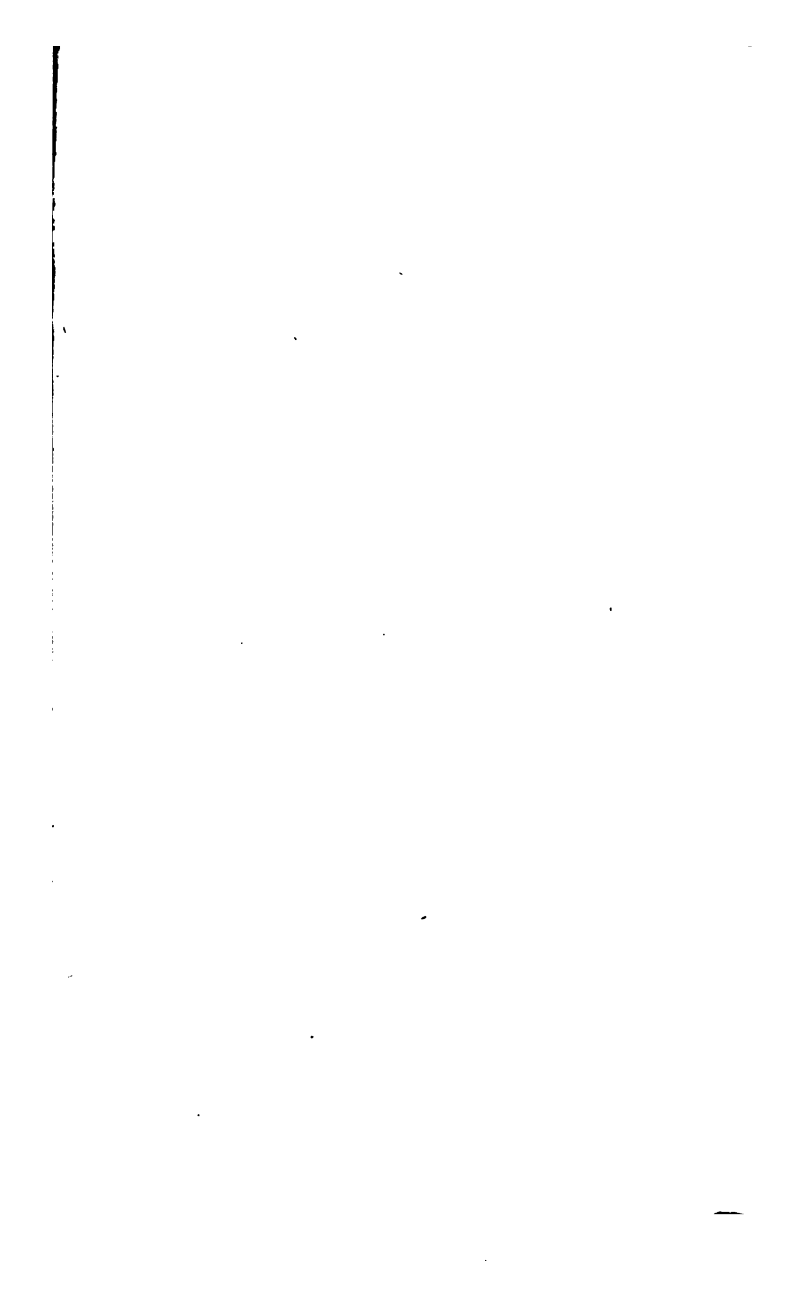
and discretion : it should be resorted to only from a desire to leave young people a perfect freedom of choice, at an age when they are more capable of feeling deeply and judging wisely.

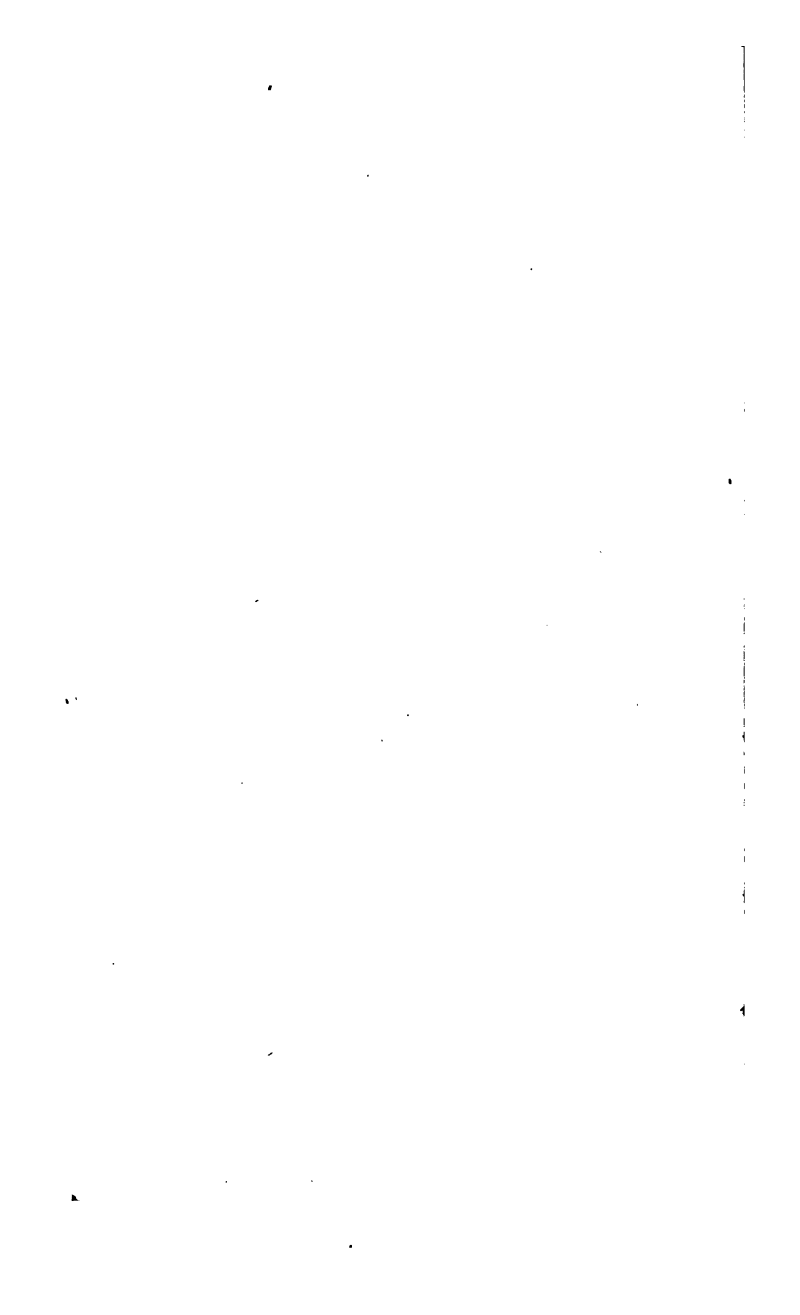
Where there is any immorality of character, this right becomes an imperative duty. If an attachment of this kind is persisted in, after a child has come to years of discretion, there is no help for it ; but I do not believe that one whose heart and mind had been properly educated, would ever persist in such a course.

The three great questions to be asked in deciding whether a union is suitable and desirable, is, 1st, Has the person good principles? 2d, Has he, or she, a good disposition? 3d, Is there a strong, well-founded preference? Connexions which are likely to lead a woman into a sphere of life to which she has been unaccustomed, to introduce her to new and arduous duties,—and to form a violent contrast to her previous mode of life,—should not be entered into, except at mature age, and with great certainty that affection is strong enough to endure such trials. But where there is deep, well-founded love, and an humble reliance on Divine Providence, all things will work right in the end.

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